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TO OUR READERS:

In compliance with the Israeli military authorities, and under the guise of the much criticized "Emergency Regulations" of 1945, Al-Fajr is required to submit all material prepared for publication in this weekly, and also in the Arabic Daily and Bi-Weekly Hebrew Edition, to the Israeli censorship authorities, who use this blanket authority excessively. The material appearing on pages labeled with letters has all been censored and expunged by the Israeli authorities. We found it necessary and relevant to publish it on these pages in the foreign edition.

Israeli Authorities Renew Town Arrest on Palestinian Journalist

Israeli authorities renewed, December 15, the town arrest restriction on Hamdi Faraj, member of the executive committee of the Arab Journalists Association (AJA) in the occupied territories. The six-month restriction expires in May 1984.

Faraj was handed the town restriction two weeks after its beginning date, December 1. He is ordered to remain home in Dheisheh camp, near Bethlehem, at night and is forbidden to leave the confines of the camp during the day. He also has to report weekly to the police station in Bethlehem.

Yousef Hamed, a member of the AJA, described the new town arrest order as "a blow to the AJA, particularly since Hamdi Faraj is responsible for the professional affairs of the Palestinian journalists."

Hamed described the decision as "arbitrary and unjust." He called on concerned international organisations to support Palestinian journalists.

Three days before he was handed the arrest order, Faraj participated in a debate broadcast by Israel Television. In the debate, Faraj criticised as "political" the recently announced refugee resettlement plan drawn up by Israeli minister without portfolio Mordechai Ben Porat.

Zvi Barel, *HaAretz* correspondent for the West Bank, told *Al Fajr*, "I am against the imposition of any kind of restriction orders on West Bank residents. The town arrest order is part of the political policy practised by Israeli authorities, including collective punishment as well as individual punishment. The authorities should prove accusations against Faraj. Governments should not punish people without trial," Barel said.

Faraj, an editor of *Al Shiru'* magazine, which was closed by the authorities earlier this year, was imprisoned twice, and his house has been searched repeatedly.

Amnesty International (AI), the London-based independent human rights watchdog, listed Faraj among those Palestinians whose movements are restricted or who are punished for their political beliefs in its 1983 report.

Referring to Faraj, AI wrote, "In the occupied territories, the possession or distribution of illegal literature or propaganda material is an offence under Article 85 of the Defence (Emergency) Regulations and Security Provisions Order (SPO) 101. A typical case was Hamdi Faraj, a journalist who was detained from April 1 to May 3, charged with possession of 12 illegal books, fined and given a six-month sentence, suspended for three years."

Activist Town Arrested

Amal Salim Wahdan Labadi, 26, was ordered restricted to her place of residence in Abu Dis, on the eastern outskirts of Jerusalem, for six months. She was informed of the restriction order on December 23. The administrative order signed by the military commander of the central district cites unspecified "security" reasons. It restricts Amal, an active member of the Women's Work Committee and treasurer of the Abu Dis Public Institutions Workers' Union, to her house at night and the confines of Abu Dis during the day.

Wahdan Labadi is married to Mohammed Labadi, curently serving a two-year sentence in Gaza prison. Her parents live in al-Bireh, 20 kilometres north of her in-laws' Abu Dis home.

Amal is six months pregnant and registered with a Kalandia hospital 15 kilometres north of Abu Dis. Military permits to leave a restricted area, which Amal will need to visit her husband, doctor and parents, often take months.

DEPORTED PRISONER APPEALS FOR REUNION

Zakiya Shammout, released from Neve Terza prison and deported in the November 25 PLO-Israel prisoner exchange, appealed to the International Red Cross for aid in reuniting her with her five children, the ICRC told the woman's lawyer, Walid Fahoum, last week.

The message was sent in Geneva to the ICRC's Tel Aviv office.

In a petition to the ICRC, Fahoum, who represents Shammout, had earlier asked that they help her back into the country or, as a last resort, help the five children to meet their parents exiled abroad. Algeria was mentioned as an alternative reunion site.

Al-Najah National University in Nablus. Checkposts set up by Israeli soldiers disrupted classes for three consecutive days in December.

Bireh Secondary School Students Clash with Soldiers

Over 40 students and two teachers were arrested from Hashimiyya Secondary School, al-Bireh, December 8, after two hours of clashes between 300 students and over 200 soldiers.

The clashes started when students protested attempts by West Bank 'civil administration' head Shlomo Elia to hold an opening ceremony at the school, two months after the beginning of the scholastic year.

At 10:30 am, before Elia arrived, seven military jeeps and three bus-loads of soldiers were stationed 200 metres from the school. In response, school sources say, students at the school, three kilometres east of the city centre, blocked entrances with stones and burning tyres and started stoning the soldiers. "The students were afraid the soldiers might hold the ceremony by force," the school headmaster, Isma'il Othman Kamal, told *Al Fajr*.

In reaction, soldiers fired 50 to 60 tear gas bombs at the pupils, who retreated into classrooms. When the soldiers entered the school, many students jumped from second floor windows in the back of the building, orces school sources reported.

Israeli soldiers arrested 15 students, "mostly those who were unable to climb walls or jump barriers," an English teacher at the school told *Al Fajr*. That night, 28 more students were taken from their homes, students said.

The school's 18 teachers were sitting in the staff room during the clashes. When soldiers broke in, they confiscated their ID cards, "badly insulted the headmaster" and forced them to open all classrooms, they reported.

Hamdi Sheleh, a Ramallah teacher, told *Al Fajr*, "We, the 18 teachers, were sent to military headquarters to get our ID cards. They only gave 16 of them back. The other two were arrested and taken away in military jeeps." The arrested teachers are Hasham Nimr Hawaih, from Ain Yabroud, Ramallah district, and Mahmoud Makhameh, from the Hebron district.

On December 7, the 'civil administration' wrote to the school's administration giving the date of the ceremony and ordering all teachers to attend.

Elia did not show up at the school. Official sources said the ceremony was postponed.

The school principal called Elia's move a "political and propagandistic" exercise. The two-storey school was built by two successive al-Bireh municipalities, headed by Abd al-Jawad Saleh and Ibrahim Tawil. "The occupation," said Isma'il Othman, only painted the school and decided to transfer it from the centre of Ramallah to Jabal Tawil. They didn't even provide the new building with its needs. The school still lacks electricity, telephones, central heating, sports facilities and laboratories."

On December 10, the school's teachers sent telegrammes protesting the harassment of students and teachers and demanding an immediate release of all detainees from the school to the International Teachers Union, the International Committee of the Red Cross, the Israeli officer for education liaison, the Ramallah military governor and the Israeli coordinator for Arab affairs on the West Bank.

Only 30-40 students from a total enrollment of 350 attended classes, December 10.

School sources described the incident as the "fiercest" since the beginning of the present scholastic year.

Roadblocks Disrupt Najah Studies

Israeli military checkposts erected at the entrances of Najah National University, in Nablus, disrupted studies for the third consecutive day, December 14.

A spokesperson told *Al Fajr* that the roadblock was positioned outside the university until noon, and all lecturers and students were turned back. The Israeli soldiers gave no explanation, he said.

The spokesperson said that students and faculty members who presented their university ID cards were allowed through the roadblocks, December 12. The university was completely sealed the next day.

University President Dr Sharif Kana'ana told *Al Fajr* that he has no idea of the reason for the roadblocking. He said that they had contacted the authorities, last week, when daily roadblocks were erected and were promised that no more obstacles would be put at the entrances. Dr Kana'ana added that they were relieved for two days, but disruptions started again on Monday.

In a related story, 10 lecturers of the 12 foreign passport-holders who still teach at Najah University signed work permit application forms, December 11. The form was reportedly the same as the one signed by Bir Zeit University lecturers three weeks ago. It states that the applicants have "read and understood the security regulations which are in effect upon receipt of the work permit."

Dr Kana'ana said the university did not take any stand with regard to the work permit application. "We neither urge nor discourage signing," he said. Dr Kana'ana said there are no plans to ask 23 foreign passport-holding lecturers who were deported last year to return. He said the decision (to return) up to them."

DURHAM PROFS PROTEST 'RANDOM' MILITARY MEASURES

Bir Zeit University received copies of petitions to Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir signed by over 100 faculty members and researchers at the University of Durham, in Britain, protesting the "unjust and inhumane sentences given to students of the University of Bir Zeit by the military court of the Israeli occupying forces at Ramallah, West Bank, on August 2 and 7, 1983."

The petitioners, which included such eminent academics as Professors Boulter and Sunderland and Sir John Richmond, were referring to prison terms of 18 months to two years handed down by Ramallah military court against 14 BZU students for allegedly "disturbing the public order" by participating in a July 27 demonstration at Bir Zeit. No soldiers were injured in the demonstration and the arrested students, the petitioners note, seem to be "victims of random selection" by soldiers, as none were detained in the act of committing any offence but instead they were arrested several hours later solely on visual identification by soldiers.

The July 27 rally protested the killing of three Palestinian students at Hebron University the day before. No one has been apprehended for the murder of the students, an official BZU press release noted.

Norwegians Vote Legal Aid for BZU Colleagues

The Norwegian Trondheim University students union voted N. Kone 2500 (US$340), October 1, 1983, for legal aid for imprisoned Bir Zeit University students.

The union issued a statement protesting the Israeli authorities' treatment of students at the universities of Bir Zeit, Nablus, Bethlehem and Hebron. "The students and staff," the statement said, "are continually exposed to attack from the Israeli police and army. Any opposition to Israeli policy in the form of demonstrations or in any other way is met with armed force and arrests.

"We demand that the Israeli authorities withdraw Military Order No 854, which makes this kind of policy possible. In addition, we demand that the universities and the students on the West Bank be given true e academic freedom and freedom of speech. These are accepted rights for students in Norway and most other countries, including Israel, and ought to be so in areas occupied by a country which calls itself the only democratic country in that region," the students concluded.

Israeli Military Accused of Deliberately Thwarting Exams

The Israeli military authorities stand accused of arresting high school students "for no legitimate reason" in order to make them miss vital *tawjihi* (matericulation certificate) exams, according to the latest report by the Ramallah-based human rights organisation Law in the Service of Man (LSM).

The report, based on surveys by field workers, lists arrests of students before or during the exams. It points out that none of the arrested students were given reasons for their detentions or the charges against them. Most students missed the vital Arabic exam and will thus have to retake the final year and take the exams next year, the LSM shows.

Under Israeli military law, any soldier can detain a person who "commits or is suspected of having committed" an offence. LSM charges that the fact that none of the students were questioned, "strongly indicates that they were not suspected" of any offence.

Fourteen students were detained in Nablus, LSM says,

LAW
IN THE SERVICE
OF MAN

between June 16 and 21 this year. Two were released after their lawyer interevened; the others were detained in al-Fara'a detention centre, near Jenin. There had been no demonstrations in Nablus for six days at the time of their arrest, LSM notes.

In Jenin, eight students were detained during the same period. There were no demonstrations reported during June in the city, LSM points out.

Twelve Ramallah youths were rounded up before the exams. Khaldun Abu Hums, however, was released before the exams started.

In Hebron, some of the 20 students arrested, where taken from the exam halls, LSM reports.

In Kalandia camp only one student, Mohammed Abed Rubuh, was prevented from sitting for the exams. There were frequent raids on homes of *tawjihi* students, LSM said, but having experienced the treatment the year before, most students slept away from home for the period of the exams.

During this year's exams, student and teacher sources estimated that over 100 candidates were detained for short periods.

Israeli Army Chief-of-Staff Moshe Levy inspects equipment developed specifically for use against stone-throwing and demonstrations in the West Bank.

Heavy Sentences for Qabatyah Stone-Throwers

An Israeli military court in Nablus sentenced 14 youths from the town of Qabatyah, near Jenin, to prison terms ranging from two to three years, December 12. They were convicted of throwing stones at Israeli military patrols, and members of the Israeli-backed Village League, four months ago.

Musa Abed Musa Abu Rub and Noah Abd al-Aziz Abu Rub were sentenced to three years each. Iyad Mahmoud Yusef and Yusef Abd al-Karim were sentenced to two and a half years. The remaining 10 youths, many of whom are high school students aged between 16 and 20, were given two years each.

The military court postponed the trials of two more youths *sine die*.

Senior Israeli Army officers recently approved harsher measures against stone-throwers after hearing demands of Israeli settlers in the West Bank.

Unionist's Arrest Blocks Jerusalem Conference

Israeli authorities bailed Shehadeh Minawi, a leading West Bank unionist, December 5, after holding him for 24 hours on charges of arranging an illegal political conference in Jerusalem.

The Labour Federation, headed by Minawi had earlier called 40 unions to a conference at the Jerusalem Chamber of Commerce to try to resolve long-standing differences in the union movement, discuss the deteriorating economic conditions in the occupied territories and to voice support for the PLO leadership.

The conference never took place. Israeli "security men" broke into the hall an hour before it was due to start and detained Minawi.

He was released on IS5000 bail on condition that he meet any police summons. "It was an unjustified detention," Minawi said after his release. "The Israeli authorities are strengthening their grip on the union movement in the occupied territories."

Last week, the authorities refused a permit for the union federation to hold a cultural exhibition.

Al Fajr has learned that the head of the East Jerusalem Arab Chamber of Commerce was verbally threatened by police officers not to rent out the Chamber's hall to anyone without prior official permission.

Whereabouts of Ex-Ansar Detainee Unknown

Another prisoner supposedly released in the PLO-Israel exchange, last month, is missing, according to his lawyer. Ex-Ansar detainee Samir Said Rashdan al-Khalil has not been heard of since the prisoner exchange, November 25. Nazareth Lawyer Walid Fahoum is petitioning the Israeli Prisons Authority and the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) to ask for help to locate him.

Fahoum told *Al Fajr* that he was contacted by relatives of the Palestinian prisoner and asked to follow up his case.

Khalil, 30, was detained June 11, 1982, after the Israeli invasion of South Lebanon. The family managed to keep contact with him through the ICRC until shortly before the exchange, Fahoum said.

The family is concerned that their son might have been taken to an Israeli jail or even killed, Fahoum reported.

On the day after his release, Ansar prisoner leader Lieutentant Colonel Salah Ta'amari told a press conference in Algeria that several prisoners were not released.

In a related story, two crewmen of a ship, *Hanan*, hijacked by the Israeli Navy on August 22 in international waters off Cyprus, charged, in a written affidavit to a Jerusalem lawyer, that they were kept in detention in defiance of the prisoner exchange agreement.

In the affidavit, the two prisoners, Akram Ahmad Salameh Hawari and Mohammed Salameh Ibrahim Sa'adallah, stated that they were taken on a bus on the night of November 25 from Ramle jail to an unknown place but were returned in the morning. The prisoners said that they were given their personal belongings, handcuffed and blindfolded before they were put on a bus. "After we arrived, the handcuffs were removed, and we were delivered new clothes of a navy-blue colour. We changed our clothes and were ordered to go back on the bus," the statement read.

The affadavit further said that someone entered the bus, called a number of names, including theirs, and ordered them to stay on the bus. Early in the morning, they were taken off the bus and bundled into a car which drove them back to Ramle.

According to the ICRC, 12 prisoners from the ship *Hanan* were released.

Town Arrest Renewed for Ramallah Man

Israeli occupation authorities renewed, November 29, the town arrest order against Niyaz Mohammed Mamhoud Mazari'a, 23, for another six months. Mazari'a is a resident of Ain Kenia, the Ramallah district, and a Bethelehem University graduate. The town restriction, signed a month ago by Uri Orr, the military commander of the central region, forces Mazari'a to remain in his village and to report to Ramallah police headquarters weekly. The order was issued for unspecified 'security' reasons.

The first order was issued against Mazari'a last May, just before his final examinations. He took his papers home.

Mazari'a told *Al Fajr* he recently got jobs with the Ramallah Community College and UNRWA, but he will not be able to start work because of the restriction.

Gaza Imam Arrested for 'Incitement'

The Israeli military court in Gaza sentenced Hijaze Burbar, 26, the *imam* of the Katibeh Mosque in Gaza, December 1, to 18 months imprisonment with a similar suspended term after he was convicted of "incitement."

The *imam* denied the charges and said that he was charged because he denounced the shooting of two students at Hebron University, last July.

During the court hearing, Burbar, who is also a senior student at the Islamic University, was charged with urging worshippers in his Friday sermons to demonstrate.

Burbar, who has been in detention since August 6, the day he allegedly made the speech, pleaded not guilty. He explained that he did not incite anybody and that he only delivered a sermon condemning the attack on the university.

The military prosecution's only witness, described by local people as "mentally incompetent," admitted the *imam* condemned the attack.

Passing sentence, the military judge said, "The accused man used the mosque's pulpit to incite trouble."

Officials of the Islamic *waqf* committee in Gaza declined to give any comment on the sentence.

Burbar's brother, Mustafa, described the sentence as "very heavy." He said that the sentence "aims at preventing us from expressing opinions."

Gaza Artist Denied Release on Bail

The Israeli military authorities turned down, November 27, a petition from Gaza artist Fathi Ghaban for release on bail. The artist was detained on November 15, one day after Israeli soldiers raided his house and confiscated copies of Egyptian magazines.

In his plea, lawyer Rafiq Abu Thalfeh requested his client be released on bail or a trial date be set. The military authorities rejected the appeal and produced a charge sheet accusing him of "incitement." A court hearing was scheduled for December 1.

Ghaban, father of seven children the oldest of whom is 15, was arrested at the Gaza military compound to which he had been summoned by military order. Family sources said that three Israeli intelligence officers made a suprise visit to the house, shortly after 9:30 pm and conducted a thorough search for "banned publications" and paintings.

The officers went through the furniture piece by piece, turning everything upside down. They finally confiscated copies of *Al Shira'*, *Al-Kateb* and the Egyptian *Al Mussawar* magazines, the family said. They also seized Ghaban's ID card and instructed him to appear at the military compound on the following day.

Ghaban, 36, is one of the most critically acclaimed artists in the Gaza Strip. Several of his paintings have been reproduced as best-selling posters.

The League of Palestinian Artists in the Occupied Territories condemned Ghaban's detention as part of the systematic policy of harassment against Palestinian painters and the Palestinian people.

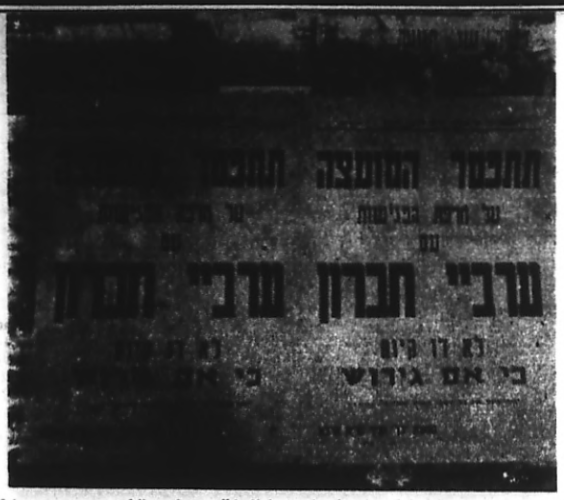
The artists called on authorities to release him immediately.

Four Dheisheh Residents Arrested for Curfew Violations

Four residents from the Dheisheh camp were arrested, November 17, for curfew violations. "The arrest was carried out in the camp on the last day of curfew, after 11 consecutive days," Jawdat Mana, member of the Social Youth Centre in the camp, told *Al Fajr*.

Mohammed Atrash, the chairman of the Social Youth Centre, Ahmad Odeh, a contractor, and Taher Barakat and Khalil Bana, construction workers, were detained by a military patrol in the camp.

The arrestees were taken to Beit Shemesh police station outside Jerusalem and then transferred to Bethlehem.



The faintest prospects of "coexistence" in Hebron pits the ultra-right wing Kach movement against their former comrades-in-arms, Rabbi Levinger's faction of Kiryat Arba settlers. The Kach poster calls on the Kiryat Arba council to resign because of their meeting with the Arabs of Hebron. Kach states their goal: "No coexistence, but expulsion."

Kach: Deport Arabs of Hebron

"It is not possible to have coexistence between Jews and Arabs either in Kiryat Arba or in any other place in the country. We want not coexistence but the deportation of the Arabs from Hebron and from the whole of *Eretz Israel*." Thus read a statement published October 24 by the *Kach* movement in response to the contacts that took place on Friday between the leaders of Kiryat Arba and Hebron Arabs.

On receiving the information about the contacts, the movement's leaders and heads of the Kiryat Arba branch convened for an emergency meeting. They decided to condemn the meeting and Rabbi Levinger who called it. He "desecrated and infected, by this act, the blood of all the saints who were murdered by Arabs from Hebron," they said.

In the opinion of the movement: "These meetings will only encourage the Arabs to (carry out) more cruel and murderous acts. (Keeping) them (here) is a concession to the dictates of Peace Now, and they constitute the zenith of degradation, national bankruptcy and the desecration of God's name.

"The next stage might be common discussions, mixed folkdances and perhaps common marriages," says the leaflet. It calls for the resignation of the Kiryat Arba local council "because of the shame of meeting with Hebron Arabs."

"The Arabs simply have nothing to look for here, and we the Jews have the duty to send them back to their countries," says the leaflet. (Translation: Al Hamishmar, October 25, 1983).

KIRYAT ARBA SETTLERS RAID HALHOUL

An estimated 400 Israeli settlers from Kiryat Arba and other settlements raided the town of Halhoul, north of Hebron, on Sunday night, November 20, and destroyed the verandas of 10 houses and three vehicles.

The settlers stormed the town in large numbers, according to locals, and an "atmosphere of terror" prevailed. Many people fled their homes to the nearby mountains.

Settlers who were on their way to Hebron encamped on the main Bethlehem-Hebron road, in the middle of Halhoul, to "protest" against continuing stone-throwing incidents in the West Bank. The settlers, who arrived in four buses and more than 50 private cars, fired a volley of shots in the air.

According to Halhoul residents, some of them then spread out into side streets, throwing stones at Arab homes and breaking 10 glass-enclosed verandas. Two cars and one bus were vandalised.

Yusef Hamed, one of the those whose houses were damaged, said he was listening to the 10:30 pm news when he heard sounds of glass being smashed. When he opened the door leading to the veranda to check the sound, a stones smashed the glass, almost hitting him in the face, he said.

In the street, three male settlers and one woman were throwing stones at his veranda, Hamed said. Seven large panes were smashed before the settlers moved to other houses. While the settlers threw stones, residents screamed and shouted at them, Hamed told *Al Fajr*. After the settlers left, Israeli soldiers arrived and inspected the damage. Residents filed complaints against the settlers at the Hebron police station.

Describing the arrival of the settlers, one resident said that the bus and car convoy suddenly stopped, and settlers poured out into the streets firing shots in the air. "It was as if the town was being invaded," one Halhoul resident said.

Many said that on hearing the gunshots, they thought the settlers were shooting at stone-throwers and expected collective punishment.

According to acting-Mayor Hijazi Madiyeh, more than 2000 residents fled to the mountains, during the attack.

Hamed explained that residents were afraid both of being rounded up and beaten by soldiers or shot indiscriminately by settlers.

The acting mayor said that Israeli soldiers who arrived shortly after the settlers arrived were unable to prevent the destruction of property. He said soldiers called on the settlers to return to their settlements with loudspeakers.

The settlers left half an hour after midnight after troops reportedly threatened to use force to disperse them.

Israeli newspapers made no mention of the attacks on Arab homes. *The Jerusalem Post* reported that the settlers blocked off traffic to "protest against stone-throwing by Arab villagers."

In a related story, settlers from a religious school near Balata refugee camp, near Nablus, broke into Mazouz al-Masri School, November 20, and threatened the principal with their guns. The settlers claimed that they were coming under constant stoning from school students.

Israeli newspapers reported that West Bank settlers have been demanding a "greater role in enforcing security arrangements" in the occupied territories. Settlers have repeatedly argued that the Israeli Army treats stone-throwers "mildly" and that court sentences of Palestinian youths accused of stone-throwing are "symbolic."

Yesh Gvul Protests 'Call-ups'

The Israeli movement of soldiers — *Yesh Gvul* (There is a limit) — protested, November 28, "illegal" Israeli Army pressure on soldiers who refuse to do military service in Lebanon. The group's spokesperson cited the repeated call-up of reservists who are then jailed for refusing to serve.

Yesh Gvul called their press conference, attended by a handful of journalists, mainly to publicise the case of Yacov Schein, a tank commander who is one of four soldiers serving a second term for refusing army service in South Lebanon. Schein, they said, is still coming under pressure from his superiors to rescind his stand. His wife Sari said he was recently visited in jail by his commander and threatened with further call-ups and imprisonment every time he gets out if he continues to refuse. The army also sent a psychiatrist to see him in jail, the press was told.

Sari told reporters that the system of calling the soldiers to service was designed to "break soldiers' resistance to military service." She asserted her husband is not needed by the army for the occupation of South Lebanon. She said she was preparing to take her husband's case to the High Court.

Yermi Milgrom, a Hebrew University professor and spokesperson for *Yesh Gvul*, noted that prison sentences from unit commanders are "much harsher than prison sentences given to criminals." He told journalists that *Yesh Gvul* is aware that there are several methods of escaping military service in Lebanon without risking prison but asserted the movement is concerned to establish the right of soldiers to refuse service for reasons of conscience.

He said *Yesh Gvul* does not want to be given the feeling by the army that they are traitors but they are only willing to carry out defensive duties.

Milgram warned that the threat of war between Israel and Syria remains strong. He warned that visits by Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir and Defence Minister Moshe Arens to the US could "trigger another unnecessary war."

A representative of the Association For Civil Rights in Israel distributed a statement denouncing the compulsory service call and demanding soldiers be called for service only if they are needed. The association also charged the Israeli Army with deliberately calling soldiers who refuse army service in order to pressure them into changing their stand.

Over 110 soldiers who refused army service in Lebanon have been sentenced to prison terms by military courts since the invasion of Lebanon. At least four soldiers have been sentenced twice or three times for the same charge.

Yesh Gvul, the movement of soldiers who refuse army service in Lebanon, was established last year, after the Israeli invasion of Lebanon. The movement does not have a formal membership but claims the support of over 2000 reserve soldiers who have signed a petition against military service in Lebanon.

KIBBUTZNIK ARRESTED FOR 'DESERTION'

Gideon Haymans, a member of Kibbutz Kerem Shalom in the Negev, was arrested by military police, November 30, for desertion. He has been refusing to serve in the Israeli Army for the past six years.

Military police entered the kibbutz in the early evening and took Haymans away. They say he is to be tried for not showing up at his base when called, last July, kibbutz sources said.

Haymans has written to the ministry of defence and the military prosecutor's office every time he has been called for the past six years explaining he will not serve until Palestinians are included in the Law of Return (Israel's immigration legislation which restricts residency to Jews) and the occupation is ended, according to peace movement sources.

Haymans is being detained *incommunicado* in a prison near Tel Aviv, kibbutz sources said.

The Israeli section of War Resisters International (WRI) protested Haymans' detention to the authorities. They demand he be exempted like all other "total resisters" and ask for an explanation of why he is being held now after six years of refusal, the movement's spokesperson said. WRI-Israel section has informed the Israeli League for Civil and Human Rights, the Israel Civil Rights Association, Amnesty International and WRI headquarters in London, the spokesperson reported.

CDDR Condemns Harassment of Refusnik

The Committee for the Defence of Democratic Rights issued a statement, November 19, condemning Israeli harassment of Michel Warshawski, 34.

Warshawski, editor of *Matzpen* and spokesperson of the Revolutionary Communist League, has served two terms in military jail for refusing to serve in Lebanon and has received a call-up order for December 19, the CDDR said. He is the first soldier to receive three consecutive mobilisation orders for Lebanon.

The CDDR called on all progressive forces to mobilise to "end the repression against Michel Warshawski and all those refusing to serve in Lebanon" by petitioning the defence minister.

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1983: A Year of Censorship

Year's end is a time for reflection and reassessment. For journalists working in the occupied territories, it is a time for counting the toll the Israeli military have taken on the profession and press institutions. Given the power the Israeli authorities have, the fact that professional journalists continue the struggle to get their papers out against all the odds is cause for some satisfaction. Nonetheless, 1983 has been a tough year.

Israel unleashed a new weapon, this year, when it summarily withdrew the licenses from two magazines. *Al Shira'*, **possibly the best-read monthly magazine in the West Bank, was shut – with no appeal – at the behest of the Israeli commissioner for the Jerusalem district. If this muscle-flexing against the controversial monthly was designed to cow those who survive it, then commissioner Levy failed.** *Al Wahda* **was shut nine months after the lisence-holder died – again there was no appeal, despite the fact that the magazine, like most publications, survived the demise of its founder.**

The Israeli security services and courts conspired to close down one West Bank press office dealing principally with translations of Hebrew material into Arabic and English. The other, the veteran Palestine Press Services, was issued only slightly veiled threats and was finally forced to stop distribution of its daily news round-up for the foreign press and diplomatic corps.

In the course of the year, three *Al Fajr* **editors in both the Arabic and English papers were put under travel restriction or house arrest, as was a colleague from** *Al Shira'*.

But most pervasive, the shadow of Israeli military censorship still falls long across Palestinian publications. An *Al Fajr* **appeal to the Israeli High Court against punitive, arbitrary and discriminatory censorship celebrated its second birthday in the course of the year – with still no final hearing in sight. Of course, censors are not detached bureaucrats whose work can stand the "civilised" scrutiny of even an Israeli legal body. They are soldiers and use threats rather than reason. The final months of the year has seen a renewed campaign of written warning against publications.** *Al Fajr* **Palestinian Weekly has been ordered to remove the dots which indicated censorship cuts, forcing us to publish the at times meaningless product of the censor's scissors unsullied by markings that may add some explanation.**

As 1983 runs into 1984, Palestinian journalists are under no illusions that the new year holds little prospect of anything other than more face-to-face confrontation with the occupation, but the daily, weekly or monthly reward of getting the next issue out in the face of constant Israeli harassment is something no censor can erase.

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The Fine Art of Civil and Political Repression

by Flavia Pesa

The deprivation of civil and political rights in the occupied territories has become a fine art. Although military operations against Israeli occupation forces are now rare occurrences in the West Bank and Gaza, the Israeli-imposed system of martial law has not stopped adding new teeth – 16 years into the occupation. The laws, in the form of military orders by decree, rain down at the rate of one per week – each extending control a little deeper into daily Palestinian life.

By now over 1000 orders and an unknown number of secret military regulations have been conjured up by Israeli legal whizzes to "preserve public order and security," but they have left Palestinians feeling very insecure indeed. Not only has their right to political and cultural expression been straight-jacketed but also every aspect of their social and economic development is under military review: schools, work places, farms, home construction. All travel is subject to military approval, and anyone can be arrested and held indefinitely – for days, weeks, even years – without formal charges or trial.

The legal maze of restrictions has reached Kafkaesque proportions, according to foreign journalists who regularly travel to the West Bank. Israeli Knesset Member Shulamit Aloni calls her government's regulations "colonialistic and brutal, and having nothing in common with a proper legal system." Palestinian lawyers went out on strike for two days in mid-September, their first protest action ever, to make public the civil rights crisis.

Over the last few months there has been a military order banning the planting of grapevines and plum trees without prior written permission; another unexpectedly raised court fees and fines, calculated in stable Jordanian dinars, by over 1000 percent; and a regulation issued verbally to Ramallah transport owners now makes it a crime for a group to hire a taxi or rent a bus without first notifying the military.

Violators of military law, tried in military courts with no right of appeal, are given draconian sentences; the more an act is seen as politically motivated, the harsher the sentence. And even the smallest wrong-doers are invariably found:

A youngster who urinated on an Israeli 1967 war memorial built next to a mosque in East Jerusalem was arrested a week after his mischief, tried and sentenced to four months in prison. Eight university students were given one-and-a-half to two years in prison for throwing stones at soldiers breaking up a demonstration on their campus. Even before their trial took place, four Jenin youths, one accused of setting fire to the car of a collaborator and three others of uprooting settlement trees, saw their families' homes cemented up by soldiers.

Collective punishment extends past families to hit entire refugee camps and towns. A military-ordered curfew kept the village of Dhahriya, population 15,000, away from their fields for one month at grape-tending time for no apparent reason other than harassment. This spring Jalazon camp residents, population 6000, were forbidden to leave the camp confines for three weeks after stone-throwing incidents.

While the military occupation allows the civil rights of the Palestinian population to be stripped away *legally*, much happens beyond the law as well. After a collaborator was shot in the village of Silwad in the Ramallah area, soldiers and settlers came in at night and destroyed the stocks of food villagers had stored in their homes for the winter.

Over the past five years the Israeli government has promoted various political and social outcasts and transformed them into well-funded and well-armed Village League associations. Investigation into the murder of a schoolteacher shot in front of his home in Beit Kahil by Village Leaguers last year was stopped shortly after it began. It was resumed this summer only after the main suspect, Mohammed Nasr, was ousted from the association.

Once charged with overseeing a temporary occupation, the Israeli military government has become a *de facto apartheid* ruler, labelling almost every act by Palestinians as a security issue while protecting Israeli settlers who perpetrate serious crimes. Lawyer Jonathan Kuttab describes the West Bank as having "two separate economic systems, two separate legal systems, two separate. . . everything."

By discretion of the military commander, settlers do not live under martial law. Instead they are treated as privileged residents, given exclusive rights to 'state land' and even delegated with emergency arrest powers. Given even this wide-ranging authority, settlers have gone beyond it. The former head of Israeli military intelligence (Shin Bet), Avraham Ahituv, argued in a recent article in the Israeli daily *Davar* that settlements were begun by settlers taking the law into their own hands – and were later legitimised by the government. Likewise, their current activities against the Palestinian population – shooting, shop-burning, land theft, window smashing and assault – find protection in the political environment.

"There is much less concern about the security of the Arab population than for the Jewish population," leading Israeli civil rights lawyer Ruth Gavison believes. "No collective punishment is ever enforced on the Jewish sector – there are no curfews there." Even after the vicious grenade and gun assault on Hebron University this July, which left three young men dead and 37 wounded, it was the Palestinian population, not Kiryat Arba settlement, where investigation centred, whose travel was restricted.

Under pressure from the Israeli law school establishment, the justice ministry set up an investigative committee in 1981 to review police procedures in cases of settler vigilantism. The Karp Committee documented, newspapers reported, that there were serious differences in investigating violence done to Arabs from violence done to Jews. Aside from the bureaucratic problems of diffused authority – police are subordinate to two different ministries, interior and defence – it was clear to the Karp Committee that political figures could and did stop ongoing investigation by simple verbal order. Significant also was the low priority which police, government and the Israeli public gave political crimes committed against Palestinians.

Karp herself is not convinced the problem is simply bureaucratic: "How is it possible that they take measures against each Arab stone-thrower and fail to bring to justice settlers who open fire?" she asked a journalist with the Israeli daily *Al Hamishmar*. One year after her committee's secret recommendations were sent to the government, there was still no response; Karp resigned in disgust.

Palestinians see fair investigations impossible because of the total collusion between settlers and government against Palestinians' rights and interests. Civil rights, in such a circumstance, are only as strong as the law and the people who uphold the law. And, as Palestinians in the occupied territories are fond of saying, "If the judge (and the lawmaker) is your enemy, who will you complain to?"

OPINION

AL FAJR invites our readers to contribute letters, articles and opinions. Contributions must be signed, but names may be withheld upon request.

What 'Goes' with the League?

by Ola L. Andersen

The writer, a so-called accredited foreign correspondent, "based in Jerusalem," tried some weeks ago to get an interview with a new "Village League" big shot in Nablus. Maybe he did not try hard enough or long enough — his efforts were fruitless. So what, the writer thought, who cares about the Village League anyway? This, not only so as to seek relief from guilt at not fulfilling a half-forgotten promise to write something on the League, but also because the League really is a kind of body that calls for very little attention, much as the West Bank and resistance against the continuing Israeli military and administrative hold on the "territories" generally calls for minor attention.

Besides, it may be time to prepare for a further playing-down of the role of the League by the Israeli administration, as they are running out of money to pay for the kind of services it performed. It's quite interesting to have translated the rhetorical questions painted on posters carried by Israeli citizens protesting the remarkable economic mismanagement of their own government — "Where Has All The Money Gone?" — and to see what they have come up with for answers: to the war (against the Palestinians — or not?) in Lebanon and to the settling of a Jewish population in the "territories." So, the writer has been trying to see if there's a shift of attention away from political issues to more plain economic ones. It's undeniably puzzling to see how any occupation has a price to be paid — not least by those occupied. But it seems there's little awareness of the fact that the worse the Israeli authorities mess up the economy for their own citizens, even worse things turn up for the semi-citizens for whom they have taken responsibility — that is, the Palestinian population of the West Bank and Gaza. On the contrary, an independent observer gets the impression that the latter react with something of a "we couldn't care less" attitude.

When it comes to the question concerning the League — a body that even by representatives of the authorities has been branded collaborationist — one may perfectly well understand why the populace gives a damn if their resources dry out. ›ng a the Palestinian resistance movement seems to be eating itself up in the northernmost part of Lebanon and that very small country of partisan strife can be expected to steal most of "the show" on the Middle East arena for a considerable time ahead, preparing herself for a "Vietnam-like" future, there is an ironic possibility, still, that when the Israeli authorities are consumed by their own internal problems (facing tough, real economic tasks of rebuilding their society, only this time with no new big waves of industrious immigrants on whom to put the burden), the semi-citizens will be the biggest loosers — with no particular effort being exerted by the authorities. The austerity that is now welcomed by some Israeli economists may simply produce a minor turn to the worse that will change the situation of the semi-citizens from 'difficult' to 'impossible'. The irony is that the axe that eventually cuts down the League will have less effect on the Palestinian population in the "territories" as a whole, regardless of political differences or animosities. It would certainly be of more than mere professional interest to see how local economists consider this question, if the authorities could risk having such a debate going on in public. Since it may be stated as an indisputable fact that the economic stucture of the West Bank and Gaza has been more or less completely transformed since 1967, with a steady adjustment to needs and opportunities provided by and within the Israeli economy (if that's the proper expression), there should be little doubt there's more than local interest in how, for instance, that society is going to meet a situation where there may be no more black jobs, or no more jobs at all, to go to in Israel, or simply how the breadwinners in this community are going to face consumer prices fixed according to a possible Israeli crisis caused by too little production?

It's not really true to say that for the time being there's nothing to report from the West Bank and Gaza. But it is true that there's not much to report, if anything, that will easily find its way onto the international pages of foreign newspapers. Such reports have usually been limited to clashes between the Israeli authorities' hold on the "territories" and resistance against it, and of course to sheer atrocities such as the killings at the Hebron University last summer. Thus there never was any great attention paid to the League, whenever its existence did not raise hell and create dramatic events in one way or another. In the present situation, however, the fate of the League may be followed with some interest as a measurement of how Israeli austerity is going to effect the Palestinians in the West Bank and Gaza as a whole.

Alleged 'Rights' and Legitimate Ownership

by Rafiq Nammari

To the Office of the Prime Minister of Israel,
Israeli Knesset

Re: the law declaring the right of Jews to live in Hebron

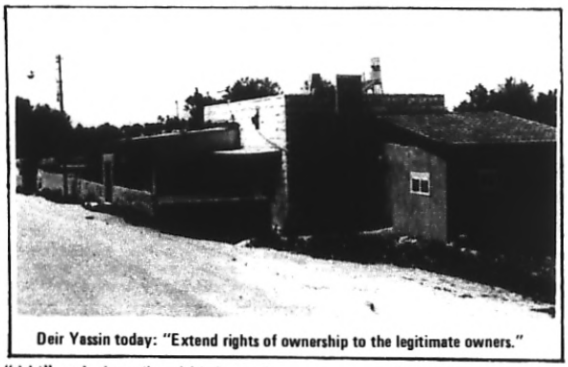
Following the discussion which took place in the Knesset, the decision of the cabinet in regard to the return of Jews to live in the various neighbourhoods in the Old City of Hebron and surrounding the Ibrahimi Mosque was based on, as usual, an alleged right; despite how this right is verified, not one Jewish resident who used to live in Hebron has any document to prove his ownership of the house he was living in. All the houses in Hebron belong to the Muslim Hebron residents; the Jews were renting their houses, no more than that.

And if a tenant who was living for a number of years in a rented home has a right to reurn to his rented home, then it is much more important and right for the owner himself to return.

Based on this, in order for justice to take its due course and keeping in mind that justice is not only for one group and not another, I the undersigned, Rafiq Abd al-Raouf Nammari, the *mukhtar* of the Baka'a neighbourhood and the Nammari family in Jerusalem, request on my behalf and on the behalf of my family, which owns a large residential neighbourhood (Hart al-Nammari) in the Beka'a district of Jerusalem as well as family property in the Sharafeh quarter in the Old City of Jerusalem and hundreds of dunums of agricultural land in the destroyed villages of Yalo, Umwas, and Latrun, do present this request, asking that I be treated on an equal basis with the (renting) Jews and be granted the right to live and use our properties and land mentioned above.

Since the discussion is about a "right" and since the right is most important above all, I hope that the right will be extended to Arab owners in Jerusalem and other places.

Finally, permit me, gentlemen of the Knesset and the various governmental bodies, to list some and not all the villages and cities whose ownership was removed from its Arab owners.



Deir Yassin today: "Extend rights of ownership to the legitimate owners."

Jerusalem

Neighbourhoods:

Baka'a, Katamon, Upper Thori, Talbieh, Musallabeh and Ma'manallah.

Villages:

Artouf, Sar'a, Saris, Akkour, Ras Abu Ammar, Kasla, al-Iabu, al-Jorah, al-Walajeh, Deir Ayoub, Yalu, Imwas, Deir Nahleh, Salbit, Beit Shamma, Khirbat Amer, Ein Karem, Soba, al-Qastal, Lifta, Deir Yassin, Staff, Beit Naquba, Nabi Ya'acoub, Beit Safafa and al-Malha.

Jaffa

Yazour, al-Safriyeh, Beit Dajan, Salameh, Khayriyeh, Saqieh, Kufr 'Ana, Yahudiyyeh, Ramtiyyeh, Fajjeh, Frukhiyyeh, al-Mur, Arab al-Sawalmeh, Abu Kishk, Bir 'Adas, Sheikh Muwannes, Arab Qor'an, Jalil, Sandiyyeh, Jreisheh, Jamasin, Sarona, Wilhelma, Tayyour, al-Abbasiyyeh, Wadi Hanin, Nabi Rubin and al-Musamayeh.

Ramle

Shama, Mansoura, Um Qal'a, Saidon, al-Na'ameh, Abu Shousheh, Bariyeh, Khaldeh, Beit Far, al-Barbar, Beit Jamal, Amouriyeh, Mughalles, Adhnaba, Rafat, Beit Sousin, Beit Jiz, Kufr Warmeh, Um Hussein, Deiraban, Mashaaleh, Deir al-Hawa, Beit 'Atab, Ein Shams, Qazazeh, Jaliyeh, Khameh, Sajad, Mukheizen, Tina, Sarafand al-Amaar, Sarafand al-Kharaab, Wadi Hanin, Sutriyeh, Zarnouqeh, Lydda, Qibya, 'Innaba, Qanineh, Kharroubeh, Beit Nuba, Latroun, Bir Na'in, Buweira, Ajanjoul, Budros, Shuqba, Shibtin, Balayan, Midya, Abu Salameh, Jamzo, Bir Filia, Shaltas, al-Bourj, Nabi Danial, Haditheh, Jundas, Tireh, Lubban, Qola, Mzarta, and Majdal Yaba.

To this list you may add the land confiscated from Arabs in the districts of Jenin, Tulkarm, Qalqiliya, Beisan and in the districts of Haifa, Akko, Zamarin, Nazareth, Tiberias and Safad.

Last but not least, please accept my total respect and appreciation for justice and rights.

Signed,
Rafiq Nammari

The UN Conference on the Question of Palestine was perhaps the most significant act of international solidarity of the past year. Its significance is underlined by the immense campaign mounted against it. *Al Fajr's* Livia Rokach was in Geneva for the conference and reported on the smoke screen Zionists tried to create around the *Palais de Nations*.

Zionist Slander, 'Armed Hospitality' Prelude Geneva Conference

GENEVA — As any serious zoologist would be able to confirm once lab tests were made, no python in the Sahara or any cobra in the deepest jungles of Africa could, psychologically speaking, hiss out such lethal poison as was spat out over the past weeks against the Geneva Conference by the local Zionist lobby and Israeli ambassador to the UN office here Ovadia Soffer. The line of the lobby has been that the conference was organised and promoted not by the United Nations but by the KGB, the Soviet secret services. In a communique they provide a long list of countries allegedly occupied and oppressed by the Soviet Union; Lebanon, El Salvador and Guatemala are absent from it.

In addition, the communique of the Jewish organisations states the Palestinians have ample space to settle in throughout the immense territories of the Arab world. The only reason they insist on sticking to the lands of little Israel is because they are anti-Semites and want to destroy the Jews.

The Zionist lobby in Geneva is animated and led by Nissim Gaon, a multi-millionaire of Sudanese origin, co-proprietor, among many other things, of the local casino and notorious for being in the habit of handing Begin blank cheques for charitable projects, such as settlement in the West Bank and massacres in Lebanon. A year ago Gaon was publicly denounced in parliament here by socialist deputy Jean Ziegler, the world-famous author of *Switzerland, Above All Suspicion*, for "blatant violation of Switzerland's traditional neutral policy," after he had issued a call to the Jewish communities to collect funds to finance the war in Lebanon. He had enclosed a telex by Begin dated June 8 in which the invasion of Lebanon was described as serving the interests of the entire Jewish people and was undertaken in the name of all Jews, "wherever they may be."

With as much sophistication, Dr (a title bestowed on him by the widely-circulating quasi-fascist daily *La Suisse*) Ovadia Soffer has declared to the media that Israel, together with Poland and Afghanistan, are the "real victims" of the "Soviet-Arab rejection front" (notoriously including such die-hard communist radicals as Saudi Arabia and Jordan) dominating the United Nations. The only reason Israel stays in this criminal, aggressive, anti-Semitic organisation, Soffer explained, is to counter the wish of its enemies to isolate it. The Geneva Conference, according to Soffer, is "openly racist," its only true goal being that of resuscitating the already dead and decomposed PLO.

While *La Suisse*, *Tribune de Geneve* and *Journal de Geneve* competed among themselves over who would best please the Gaon-Soffer lobby, not one Swiss voice rose to denounce the muck; not one letter or a single communique claimed the right of the Swiss people to the dignity of truth.

Several observers remarked that if the UN Conference on Palestine got through to its conclusion on September 7 unperturbed by violence and provocations leading to tragedy this would be so thanks less to the massive military deployment in town and around the Palais des Nations than in spite of it. The deployment of thousands of troops armed to the teeth with tanks, armoured vehicles, air defence armaments and constant over-flights by military planes to "prevent air raids and hostage-taking," among other things, was not at all intended for the protection of the Palestinian protagonists of the conference.

On the contrary, the hardly concealed aim of the unprecedented "security measures" adopted, including road blocks, searches and identification procedures reminiscent of Beirut, was to intimidate and brainwash the local population into believing that whatever and wherever there is a reference to Palestine and to Palestinians there can only be trouble. The fault, of course, is the Palestinians' and exclusively theirs.

For weeks and days, newspapers, TV broadcasts and official posters in three languages warned the stunned people of Geneva that the troops on guard would shoot on sight anybody who did not immediately obey orders to halt, as well as anybody suspected of trying to penetrate into the guarded area. Moreover, the population was called upon to inform the police of "anything suspect or abnormal," with promises of total discretion for informers.

Believe it or not, the key figure behind this orchestrated hysteria was Guy Fontanet, minister of justice and police of the Canton of Geneva, who has been accused by Italy, its press and a large part of the world media, as well as by the local socialist party, of being politically responsible for the escape from Geneva's "high-security prison"Champ Dollon, last August 10, of international criminal Licio Gelli.

On the eve of his extradition to Rome, Gelli was to face trial as the head of the P-2 subversive clandestine organisation which planned a coup to overthrow the democratic institutions in Italy. (The P-2 was the favourite baby of the Western intelligence community, of which the Mossad is notoriously, beside the CIA, a leading partner). It is widely whispered that Fontanet has been mounting his "show of force" in regard to the conference in order to rehabilitate his reputation, damaged by Gelli's escape. At the same time it should also be noted, however, that the same parties interested in organising Gelli's escape are the ones who have promoted the hate and hysteria campaign against the "dangerous" conference. One more curious note: following Gelli's escape, Fontanet declared that there had been information that he was planning such a move but that they "expected a clamourous operation, with helicopters landing in the prison and the taking of hostages." Instead, Gelli very simply had a prison policeman who opened all the doors and gates in front of him with a regular key, then drove him in his own car to the nearest airport. The conference protection has likewise been planned to prevent "air raids and hostage-taking."

In the name of the Arab delegations participating in the conference, the head of the Algerian delegation, Ahmad Yazid, protested what he ironically called the "armed hospitality" accorded by the Swiss government.

With all this going on, the Israeli mission at the UN centre has been permitted to open, a few metres away from the seat of the conference and for its duration, a special so-called "information centre." In reality it is an authentic den of disinformation.

The secretariat of the conference cannot be exempted from responsibility for all this. It chose to stay in New York practically up to the last minute and arrived in Geneva three days before the inauguration session, too late to change the accomplished facts — or the atmosphere. This delay also caused confusion and difficulties for sympathetic groups and organisations wishing to obtain accreditation for their delegates.

On the occasion of the conference the Swiss-German TV broadcasted, on the evening of August 30, a debate on the question of Palestine. Directed with deliberate ambiguity, it ended up in a confrontation which in the following days was to be echoed in discussions in the press about the programme. Protagonists of the debate were Catholic priest Martin Beutler, a longtime supporter of the Palestinian cause, and the president of the Jewish associations in Zurich, Mr Feigel. For lack of argument, evidently, all Feigel could produce were accusations of "anti-Semitism" against Reverend Beutler, who successfully rejected the allegations, sticking strictly to the realities of the Palestinian problem. The very next day Reverend Beutler began receiving threatening phone calls, of the following tenor: "You'd better escape and hide, otherwise we'll kill you. Heil Hitler!"

Dismaying, but not surprising, seeing its increasingly pro-Zionist positions, especially since Mitterand's rise to power in France, was *Le Monde*'s coverage of the conference by its super-Zionist and super-reactionary Geneva correspondent Isabelle Vischniac. Her reports were totally permeated with the above-described Israeli Ambassador Soffer's spirit and arguments. Highly serious, by contrast, was the coverage by the Italian press, which harshly criticised the Italian government's absence from Geneva denouncing the hypocrisy of Rome's official policies.

AMNESTY DETAILS ISRAELI HUMAN RIGHTS VIOLATIONS

by Ghassan Bishara
Our Washington DC Correspondent

The 1983 report on government violations of human rights by Amnesty International (AI), just released, will undoubtedly become the target of criticism by many governments which, while critical of its findings, are also aware of Amnesty's prestige and effects worldwide. The report, which covers the 1982 year, details the human rights violations of 177 countries, including the state of Israel.

AI is an independent organisation pursuing several aims, such as the release of prisoners who are "detained anywhere for their beliefs, colour, sex, ethnic origin, language or religion, provided they have not used or advocated violence." AI also promotes "fair and early trials for all political prisoners" and seeks to release those held in prisons without charges or trial; it also opposes capital punishment, the use of torture and cruel and inhuman treatment of detainees. AI bases its work on the UN's Universal Declaration of Human Rights and is supported in doing so by more than 500,000 members in over 150 countries and territories. In addition AI also has formal relations with international and regional organisations and is financed by subscriptions and donations from its members. AI's annual report is highly respected by individuals and organisation and is much feared by some governments found in violation of their citizens' or others' human rights.

Israel Found Guilty

In its section on Israel, AI expresses concern about prisoners of conscience, "use of administrative measures" without judicial involvement, house or town arrests without charge or trial, as well as short term arrests, also without trial or charge. Concerns were also expressed about "summary trials," reports of mistreatment of prisoners and "killings by the security forces" in mass demonstrations. Detainees in Ansar camp, established following the 1982 Israeli invasion of Lebanon, and their ill-treatment at the hands of the Israeli authorities are also of concern to AI in the 1983 report.

AI also reports cases of conscientious objectors in Israel, whose imprisonment is justified by the state because of membership in, or sympathy with, the PLO. AI rejects the argument adhered to by Israel regarding membership and says that membership in or sympathy with the PLO doesn't necessarily mean advocacy of the use of violence, and thus AI seeks the release of these individuals. Israeli soldiers who refuse to serve in the occupied territories or Lebanon and who were imprisoned by Israeli authorities, AI argued, are "prisoners of conscience" and the organisation thus worked on their behalf. The case of Hamdi Faraj, a West Bank journalist detained by Israel for more than a month for owning "12 illegal books," is detailed in the AI report. Also mentioned is the case of 13 Druze from the Golan Heights who were detained under administrative orders because of their opposition to the annexation ordered by Israel of their territory. Arrests of hundreds of West Bankers, mainly children and students, because they took part in demonstrations is also a cause for AI concern.

Reports of torture and mistreatment of prisoners are once again brought to the attention of AI, based on testimonies of former prisoners. The Israeli attorney-general, when approached by AI about torture and ill-treatment of prisoners, described the accusations as "exaggerated and fabricated." AI also probed reports of the deaths of Palestinians under Israeli control, such as "seven men whose bodies were found in an Israeli detention center in Sidon." AI also rejects Israel's justification of the shooting deaths of 15 Palestinians during 1982 as being in 'self-defense'. The report also talks of the massacres at Sabra and Shatila in September 1982, which occurred when the Israeli armed forces were in full control of the area.

Mistreatment of Women Prisoners Stirs Protest

ISRAELI WOMEN DEMONSTRATE IN SOLIDARITY WITH PALESTINIAN WOMEN PRISONERS

'FREEDOM FOR FREEDOM FIGHTERS'

Over 50 members of the Israeli group Women Against the Occupation demonstrated, October 7, outside Neve Tertza prison protesting the mistreatment of Palestinian women prisoners. The demonstrators arrived at 1:00 pm and for two hours shouted slogans denouncing Israel's occupation of the West Bank and the Gaza Strip and the "inhuman treatment" of 38 Palestinian prisoners in the jail who have been on a work strike since July. The demonstrators carried placards reading: "Freedom for Freedom Fighters," and "Palestinian Prisoners are not Slaves." The police did not interfere with the demonstrators.

Osnat Ron, a member of the group, told *Al Fajr* that the latest demonstration followed several solidarity protests. The women's movement held a demonstration, August 5, and distributed leaflets on the conditions of women prisoners in Neve Tertza two weeks ago.

The group has contacted Palestinian women's groups in the West Bank and, Ron said, works hard to coordinate activities with Palestinian women.

The Palestinian women prisoners currently spend 23 hours a day in confinement, the WAO said. The prisoners have to waste their free hour waiting for doctors and contacting the administration to ask for services. Family visits are only allowed in the presence of a guard who interrupts conversation. Prisoners and their families have to shout to each other over a two-metre-long table which separates the prisoners from the visitors.

The Women's Committee Against War was formed June 9, 1982, three days after the Israeli invasion of Lebanon. The name was changed to "Women's Committee Against Occupation" some months ago, a spokeswoman said, because members found similarities between the situation in Lebanon and the occupied territories.

The committee combines the issues of feminism and struggle against oppression. Though small in number, the group has been described as "unique and disciplined" and one that is "urgently needed to coordinate women's activities of both peoples."

The joint protest was described by representatives of the West Bank women's committees as successful. A member of the Working Women's Committee said she saw the sit-in as a "first step to forcing the Israeli authorities to stop the repressive measures used against Palestinian prisoners." She added that they consider it within the responsibility of all public institutions in the occupied territories to escalate confrontation with the Israeli policy of repression.

The Women's Work Committee praised the more than 20 relatives of women prisoners for taking part in the protest. The representative of the Palestinian Women's Committee approved what her two colleagues had said, adding that the protest was "a successful event." She added that more activities should be organised "to attract enough attention to the inhuman conditions under which Palestinian prisoners live."

The 25 women political prisoners in Neve Tertza prison began a work stoppage, four months ago, after the prison authorities tried to force them to serve food to the prison guards. The prison authorities responded with a series of restrictions, including the confiscation of books and extra clothes, and suspended access to radio and television.

The women are also isolated from each other, reports say.

Tear Gas Attack Fails to Break Prisoners

Five Palestinian women prisoners in Neve Tertza prison, in Ramle, on work strike since last July, were injured, October 31, after prison guards attacked them with tear gas and clubs, according to recent visitors to the jail.

According to reports, Nadia Ahmad Khayat, who is serving a life sentence, was the most severly hurt. Her mother told *Al Fajr* that she was suffering from burns on the face and bruises on her neck. Nihaya al-Musa, Itaf Salameh, Rushidiyeh Na'amneh and Hanan Msih also suffer from similiar bruises.

Lawyer Lea Tsemel, who visited the prisoners November 4, told *Al Fajr* that tear gas is still in the air and on the walls. She said cell walls are "covered with a yellow substance." She could not identify it.

The attack on the prisoners, Tsemel said, occurred after the prison authorities confiscated the remaining books from their library. The prisoners shouted and banged on cell doors in protest and prison guards retaliated by firing tear gas.

Later Tsemel reported, after meeting clients in the jail, gas-masked soldiers beat up the still protesting prisoners.

Some of the tear gas canisters struck women prisoners in the face, causing burns and setting their hair on fire, Tsemel said.

The lawyer told *Al Fajr* that prisoners told her that the prison authorities did not allow a doctor or nurse to see the prisoners immediately after the attack. "After three days they allowed the prisoners to have vasaline to treat the burns," she went on. During these three days, the prisoners were prevented from leaving their cells for exercise. Food was served to them in their cells and much of their personal belongings, such as extra clothes and blankets, were confiscated. Cleaning materials were taken and prisoners could not clean up the mass left from the assault, Tsemel reported.

Teresa Halaseh, who is serving a life sentence and who is suffering from skin diseases, told the lawyer that the prisoners "came out stronger," Tsemel reported.

The mother of Nadia Khaiyat, who was at the ICRC office in Jerusalem when the sit-in protest took place, November 4, told *Al Fajr* that her daughter is in "very high spirits. Her health, however, is not very good," she added.

The tear gas attack is the most serious incident since the strike startd four months ago. Prisoners report they are not against working but that they continue to "refuse to serve food to our oppressors."

Gassing Effects Remain

Six Palestinian women prisoners in Neve Tertza prison, Ramleh, still suffer the effects of the tear gas attack on them, last October 31, lawyer Walid Fahoum of Nazareth, who visited the prison, November 15, told *Al Fajr.*

Fahoum said that a gas residue can still be smelled in the air. He explained that the amount of gas used against the three cells was equivalent to three and a half kilogrammes. Veteran prisoners say that this is the largest amount of gas ever used in such a small area. "A similar amount was used in an assault on 12 cells in Beer Sheba prison, two years ago," the sources said.

Lawyer Fahoum told *Al Fajr* that six women prisoners are still suffering from gas burns. Burns were evident on the left cheek of Nihaya A'aref al-Musa and Teresa Halaseh's forehead, he said. Iman Abu Khater, Itaf Yusef, Itaf Salaymeh and Ni'meh al-Hilu, who has an amputated arm, also complained of health problems after the gassing.

Neve Tertza prisoners have been on strike since the summer, refusing to serve prison guards in the kitchen. On October 31, guards gassed the prisoners in their cells, following protests over the confiscation of Arabic books.

ACTIVISTS UNITE AGAINST BRUTALITY AT NEVE TERTZA

More than 100 women activists and relatives of Palestinian political prisoners held a sit-in strike at the headquarters of the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), November 4, to protest the mistreatment of Palestinian women prisoners in Neve Tertza prison in Ramle. The protesters urged the ICRC to send a delegation to investigate the latest attack against the women prisoners in which at least five were wounded, according to reports from the jail.

The protest was organised jointly by four West Bank women's committees, in coordination with the Israeli Committee of Women Against the Occupation and the Committee of Democratic Women, in order to "raise political awareness about the women prisoners' four-month-old strike."

During the protest, Jerusalem lawyer and human rights activist Lea Tsemel informed the participants of the conditions of the women prisoners after the latest attack by prison guards, October 31. The lawyer, who joined the sit-in directly after returning from Neve Tertza, said that five women are currently suffering from burns, bruises, the effects of tear gas and beatings by truncheons.

The women's committees which sponsored the two-hour sit-in read a statement denouncing the maltreatment of Palestinian political prisoners. The statement, signed by the four committees, linked the escalating campaign against prisoners with the present political situation. "They (the prison authorities) attacked the unarmed women detainees using tear gas grenades, broke into the cells and prevented (the prisoners) from: 1) using books, newspapers and radios, so as to isolate them; 2) being visited by their families; 3) getting enough exercise, by reducing the recreation period; and 4) receiving clothes from their families," the statement read.

As one woman activist read the statement, mothers of the prisoners interrupted, shouting at the Red Cross officials to visit the prisoners.

A letter of solidarity from Jerusalem lawyer Felicia Langer was also read during the gathering.

At the end of the protest, a delegation from the organisers and relatives of the prisoners met the director of the Jerusalem ICRC office. They told him of their concern about their relatives, especially since they could not go to visit them themselves. Earlier the mother of political prisoner Khitam Khattab, who is serving eight years imprisonment, told *Al Fajr* that they were allowed to visit once every two months. She said that a representative of the ICRC also visits the prison once every two months.

An employee at the ICRC office told *Al Fajr* that they would be visiting the prison "sometime next week." He, however, declined to give any further information.

POLITICAL IMPRISONMENT, DETENTION

Repression Escalates At Hebron Prison

Hebron prison authorities recently escalated repression against striking Palestinian political prisoners, detainees' parents reported September 22. Prisoners complained, through their parents, of unresponsiveness to their demands by the International Committee of the Red Cross.

Abed Abu Hilal, father of Ibrahim Abu Hilal who is serving a 12-year sentence, told *Al Fajr* that he and other parents are getting worried at the lack of news from their relatives. He said that the latest information they heard, nearly one month ago, was that striking prisoners were "falling under much repression." Many prisoners who the authorities consider to be responsible for the strike were placed in solitary confinement, he said.

Abu Hilal said he has heard that the entire prison population is threatened daily and their rations are being reduced. There is a news blackout in the jail. Prisoners do not hear radio news — no papers are allowed in. The exercise period has been cut from two hours a day to one.

Family sources stated that the ICRC makes routine visits to the prison but that prisoners feel the prison administration is not under pressure to accept their demands. Prisoners' families, who approached the ICRC formally twice, said they are considering sending a letter of complaint to the committee's headquarters in Geneva.

Hebron's 350 political prisoners began the strike in July. The 'final straw', sources say, came when the administration divided the five-by-seven metre courtyard in half, isolating prisoners in two cells from the rest of the jail. Prisoners were already complaining about the poor quality and meagreness of their rations.

Hebron prisoners have also sent out complaints about what one source called the "eternal problem of overcrowdedness." Ex-prisoners who have served in the jail say the compound was built to accomodate 250 prisoners but now holds 350.

Health Plea For Ramle Prisoner

Palestinian political prisoner Nabil Khalil Shawkeh, 25, from Nablus, who suffers from kidney problems, requires immediate treatment to save his life, his lawyer Felicia Langer told *Al Fajr*, September 21.

His family petitioned last May for his release. Their letters were ignored. Since then, Shawkeh has been sent several times to Ramle prison hospital for dialysis. According to medical sources in the jail, his health is in danger.

Langer, who visited the prisoner in Ramle prison three weeks ago, said he must be released immediately if his life is to be saved. She is reportedly considering further efforts in order to get him released.

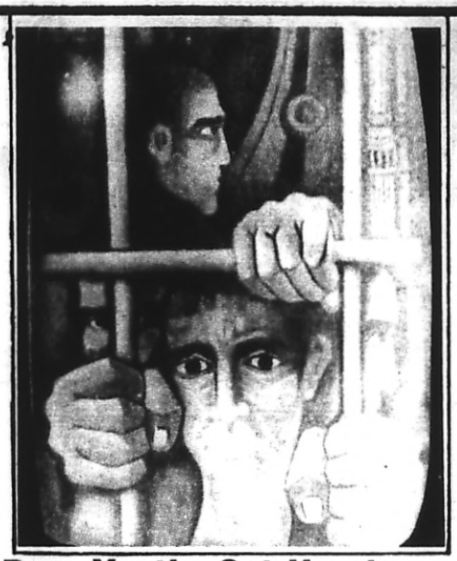
Nabil Shawkeh is serving a four-and-a-half-year prison sentence. He was arrested November 1982 on charges of membership in an "illegal organisation" and training in the use of arms.

During the past two weeks, lawyers reported that three Palestinian political prisoners are suffering terminal illnesses. Medical appeals in all cases are before the authorities.

GAZA YOUTHS CHARGED FOR DEMONSTRATION

Israeli military courts in the Gaza Strip convicted 35 youths on charges of taking part in demonstrations. The youths, mostly school students aged between 15 and 20, were fined up to IS20,000 each.

Gaza lawyers who defended the students said that in many cases, trials were being held collectively and without any prior notice.



Dura Youths Get Harsh Sentences

Israeli military court in Ramallah sentenced five Palestinian school boys from Dura, near Hebron, September 6, to unusually heavy prison terms ranging between 15 to 30 months. They were convicted of taking part in demonstrations, writing anti-Israeli slogans, membership in an illegal organisation and preparing petrol bombs.

Shaher Said Awawdeh, 18, and Fahmi Mohammed Raji, 18, were given a two-and-a-half year actual sentence each. They were also given two years suspended sentence. Hashem Abd al-Aziz and Munir Yusef Hdaid were sentenced to 18 months actual imprisonment and an additional one-and-a-half-years suspended term.

The fifth youth, Abd al-Fattah Amin Raba'i, was given 15 months in prison and two years suspended.

The five youths, all students at Dura Secondary School, were convicted on the basis of their own and other students' testimonies.

Abd al-Aziz Khtait, father of one of the students, said that the five youths confessed only to two charges, demonstrating and writing graffitti. It was on the basis of other students' confessions that they were convicted of the more serious charges of membership and making bottle explosives. Five other students from the same school were arrested earlier and accused of at least two of the same charges: membership in an "illegal organisation" and making petrol bombs. Town residents say that they were forced to confess to the charges. The trial of the remaining students was postponed until October 26.

According to the families of the five students, jailed in Hebron prison, the boys have been in detention since April 24. Soldiers arrived in the town in the middle of the night, arrested them from their homes, handcuffed them and took them away in military jeeps.

Appeal For Health Release

Palestinian political prisoner Ali Hamdan Halaykah, 50, from the village of Shayukh, near Hebron, issued urgent appeals for his release for health reasons. He was recently transferred to Ramle prison hospital on complaining of a serious heart ailment, the prisoner's family told *Al Fajr*, November 23.

Meanwhile the family visited their son, Monday, November 21, and learned he is suffering from swelling in the coronary artery and blocked heart valves. They say his condition is deteriorating and that if his life is to be saved he must have urgent medical treatment and possibly an operation.

Ali Halaykah, who is serving a life sentence for taking part in military operations, has been in poor health for some time. He had a stomach operation some years ago.

YA'ABAD YOUTHS DETAINED ON ARSON CHARGE

Israeli military authorities detained five youths from Ya'abad, near Jenin, October 18, on suspicion of arsoning the mayor's car. Earlier protests by town residents caused the mayor's attempt to arrange a visit by the head of the Israeli 'civil administration' to be aborted.

The car of Mayor Mirweh Anis Qasim was torched on Monday night by unidentified people. According to local sources, Israeli policemen arrived after they heard of the blaze and the following day detained Samih Abu Bakr, Adnan Zaid al-Kilani, Walid Fathi Daoud, Jamal Sadeq Abu Bakr and Ziyyad Hamarneh. The youths were taken to the military compound for questioning. Later Samih Abu Bakr was released.

Ya'abad residents believe the burning of the car was part of the protest at Qasim's attempts to receive the 'civil administration' head Shlomo Elia in the town. Qasim, brother of the Jordanian minister for occupied territories affairs, had contacted local notables, asking them to support the visit, over the previous few days. He is reported to have wanted prominent locals to attend a reception for Elia.

Reliable sources in the town reported that the mayor received unanimous rejection.

Meanwhile, slogans were daubed on city walls denouncing the 'civil administration', the Village Leagues and the mayor. Sources said that the visit of the 'civil administration' had been cancelled.

PALESTINIAN WOMEN STRIKE TO PROTEST PRISONER ABUSE

Over 20 women, relatives of Palestinian prisoners in Israeli jails, mostly from Bethlehem and Hebron, held a three-hour sit-in strike at the Red Cross headquarters in East Jerusalem, September 14, protesting bad treatment of the Palestinian prisoners.

"The prisoners at Hebron jail," Jamileh Abd al-Rahman Khatib, 43, whose son Akram Attulla is in the prison, said he "cannot see the sun because his 15-by-seven-metre cell was split into two squares." Jamileh added that she has not seen Akram for three months since prisoners started a protest strike.

Nasser Abu Ajamieh, an ex-prisoner at the Hebron jail, said: "The prisoners demand the improvement of medical treatment, food and cultural facilities." The strikers pointed out that many prisoners are suffering chronic diseases.

They listed: Ibrahim Hamdan, imprisoned for four and a half years, who is suffering from headaches and ear inflamation; Ibrahim Abu Hila, sentenced for 12 years, has a spinal disease, ulcers, kidney inflamation and tuberculosis; Yusef Balo, sentenced to 15 years, suffers from many chronic diseases; Ismail Hussein Atieh, sentenced to four years, suffers from constant pains in his leg; Ibrahim Khalil, sentenced to seven years, has a kidney disease; and Jamal Faraj, sentenced to 18 months, has diabetes.

The strikers told *Al Fajr* that the prison administration frequently cuts the cold water supply and there is no hot water.

In related news, Teresa Halasa, 30, sentenced to life imprisonment in 1972, sent a letter last week to the commissioner of Israeli prisons requesting treatment from her personal physician. According to prison authorities, Halasa fears she has cancer. She suffers from sharp pains and the prison doctor's treatment is not helping her. Walid Fahoum, her lawyer, told the press that her family is ready to pay for private medical treatment.

In a similar letter, Abd al-Rahim Abd al-Fatah Iraqi, 50, from Tireh, in the Triangle, complained of ulcers, kidney diseases, joint inflamation, internal bleeding and swellings. His family demanded that he should receive special treatment. Abd al-Rahim was jailed for life in 1968.

On September 8, the Palestinian prisoners in Asqalan jail issued a statement in which they denounced the "racist policy practiced against the Palestinian prisoners by the administration" of Asqalan prison.

The statement said that Israeli occupation authorities send medical teams to the prison to practice on the Palestinian prisoners but do not give them proper medicine or treatment.

The statement appealed to all local and international institutions to save the lives of Hassan Qattami and Fayez Badawi. Qatami suffers from skin cancer and Badawi has blood cancer. They have been receiving treatment at Ramle hospital for several months and the prisoners at Asqalan were notified that their conditions are deteriorating.

One paragraph of the statement reads: "We appeal to the public, local and international institutions to struggle for the necessary medical treatment to save them from the fates of Mujir Hassan Zaqout and Hamzeh Abu Shueib from Asqalan who died because of their diseases."

Palestinian women prisoners at Neve Tertze started a work strike last June 10, protesting the bad treatment in jail and refusing to serve wardens in the kitchen. Hebron prisoners have also been on strike since June.

UNIONISTS, ACTIVISTS ENDURE PERSONAL HARASSMENT

Tulkarm Union Raided

Israeli soldiers raided the offices of the Tulkarm Labour Union and Public Institutions Workers Union, November 9, and briefly detained two people who happened to be on the premises. Earlier three union and other activists were put under town restriction.

The raid occurred at 11:00 am, when a clinic run by the union was receiving patients. The soldiers detained Dr Kathem Abu Zant and Bashar Abu Tin, a high school student, and members of the administrative committee of the secondary students organisation.

Dr Abu Zant was questioned on his work in the clinic, it was learned later. His interrogators asked who payed him and who attended the clinic.

Bashar Abu Tin was questioned on his role within the student committee and previous detentions, Tulkarm sources reported. Both were released at about 7:00 pm.

Three locals are presently serving administrative town arrests. Imad Labadi, a professional unionist and member of the construction workers union, was served his six-month town restriction, September 1. He was ordered to serve the restriction in his home village of Kufr Labad and to report to the Anabta police station every Sunday. The order was signed by the commander of the central region. No reason was given.

Faisal Hindi, a member of the administrative committee of the Public Institutions Workers Union who runs the union's Qalqiliya office was ordered, October 26, to remain in the city limits for six months. He is also required to report to the police station once a week.

Asa'ad Odeh, secretary of the local Voluntary Work Committee in Tulkarm, was also served with a similar restriction, October 19. Odeh was instructed to report to the Tulkarm police station every day. The files of the unions, the Voluntary Work Committee and the Committee of Working Women were seized in a raid last year.

Samiha Khalil Appeals to See Sons

Samiha Khalil, head of the al-Bireh based *Inash al-Usra* (Family Rehabilitation) Society, appealed, October 19, for "all mothers in the world to back her in her efforts to see her sons in Jordan."

In an appeal distributed locally, Khalil wrote: "I live in loneliness since the Israeli authorities will not give me permission to go to Jordan to see my five sons who live there or allow them here as visitors. I, like other women, want and have the right to see my sons. There is no law in the world which can deprive me of this. These procedures used against me simply violate international regulations."

Khalil says she has written several letters to Israeli officials but has not received satisfaction. She described her appeal to *Al Fajr* as "not propaganda or incitement but simply humanitarian."

Khalil was under town arrest for 30 months from August 1980.

Samiha Khalil: denied access to her sons.

Kober Residents Jailed for 'Military Offences'

The military court in Ramallah jailed two Palestinian residents of Kober village, Ramallah district, for military offences, November 21. Kamal Abdullah al-Fahel, 28, who was arrested on July 7, 1983, was convicted of preparing a weak explosive device and of "working for a hostile organisation." He was sentenced to two years imprisonment, with two years suspended.

His brother Khalil, who was arrested August 26, was convicted of "withholding information." Khalil was sentenced to one year in jail, with another suspended.

RED CRESCENT OFFICIALS CHARGED FOR POSSESSION OF BANNED BOOKS

Israeli military authorities charged, November 20, two officials of the Red Crescent Society in Gaza with possession of "banned books." Dr Haidar Abd al-Shafi, head of the RCS, and Abd al-Karim Taluli, director of its library, will be tried December 15.

The charge follows a raid on the RCS in November, 1982 in which 33 books were confiscated.

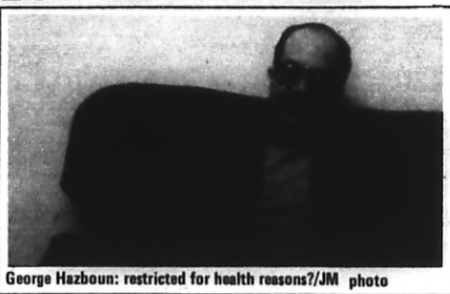
The charge sheet says that the two officials were found in possession of four banned books, "in violation of article 88 of the emergency regulations." The four books are: *The Fourth War — Part Two, The Secret War, Um Sa'ad,* (by Ghassan Kanafani) and *Israel: A Colonial Reality*. The authors' names were not included on the charge sheet.

After the raid Taluli was detained for three days.

The Red Crescent Society's library in Gaza is the biggest public library in the city. It serves high schools and university students, as well as the general public.

The library was arsoned twice in the past two years.

Bethlehem Unionist Barred From Gaza



George Hazboun: restricted for health reasons?/JM photo

George Hazboun, member of the Executive Committee of the General Federation of Trade Unions, was handed a military order, October 18, restricting him from entering the Gaza Strip for one year. No reasons were given for the measure.

The military order dated mid-September, was signed by the then military governor of the Gaza Strip, General Haim Erez. The order is based on the pretext of "public security and order."

Israeli policemen came to Hazboun's home in Bethlehem, October 17, to give him the order. When they did not find him, they left him a summoning notice.

Hazboun, who was deposed from his post as deputy mayor of Bethlehem by Mayor Elias Freij, told *Al Fajr* he cannot think of any reason for the measure. "Maybe because of the cholera cases in the Strip," he said sarcastically. Hazboun explained that he rarely goes to Gaza anyway. "I am suprised at this measure," he continued. Since he was deposed as deputy mayor, Hazboun has come under increasing harassment from the Israeli authorities, he says, pointing out that he has received frequent summonses to the military compound for questioning.

He also reports being imprisoned several times. His latest detention coincided with *al-Adha* feast, September 17. He was held for 24 hours in jail for unspecified reasons and then released.

Lawyer Charged for 'Making Contact'

The Israeli military court in Nablus convicted Sam'an Daoud, a Palestinian lawyer from Zababdeh, near Jenin, November 14, of contacting an "illegal organisation." He was sentenced to six months imprisonment, four and a half months of which was suspended.

Daoud, a graduate of Damascus University, was initially accused of membership in the PLO, according to local reports. He was detained, last June, for 46 days of interrogation. He was released for lack of evidence.

In court Daoud's lawyer, Walid Fahoum, of Nazareth, succeeded in reducing the charge from membership to "making contacts." He was released from the court, after it was decided that he served the actual sentence during his detention last year.

Gaza Doctor Arrested

Dr Fathi Ibrahim Shaqaqi, from Rafah in the Gaza Strip, was arrested, September 26, at the local police station where he was going to register his name in compliance with a town restriction order issued one day earlier. Another Rafah physician, Dr Mohammed Joudeh, 28, who works in Makassed Hospital in Jerusalem, was served with a six-month town arrest order the same day.

Dr Shaqaqi, 33, was visited by Israeli police at Augusta Victoria Hospital, Jerusalem, where he works, and handed a written order informing him that he had been restricted to his hometown. The order specified "anti-government activities."

The police gave Dr Shaqaqi four hours to get to Rafah. The order also required Dr Shaqaqi to sign his name at the Rafah police station at 4:00 pm every day.

On the day after his arrival he was arrested and taken to his home, which was searched. Later he was taken to prison.

Abd al-Aziz Shaqaqi, a pharmacist and brother of the detainee, said the family does not know why he is being held. Abd al-Aziz, who was earlier prevented from making a business trip to Saudi Arabia, said they also do not know where his brother is being held.

Dr Mohammed Joudeh was given no reason for his town arrest order. Dr Rustum Nammari, Makassed director, said that his restriction would increase the burden on other physicians in his department, as well as being an obstacle to his practicing and developing his skills.

Last week Israeli military authorities placed two Islamic University teachers in Gaza under town arrest. No reasons were given.

ARTIST'S HOME RAIDED

Israeli soldiers broke into the house of Palestinian artist Fathi Ghaban, in Jabaliya camp, the Gaza Strip, November 14, and confiscated a number of magazines, books and paintings.

Ghaban, a well known Palestinian artist, is a teacher in the Nasr Islamic School. He was summoned for questioning on the following day.

A land grab is a land grab — people lose their property and livelihood, areas for new settlements are prepared. But the pretexts provided for each Israeli grab vary. *Al Fajr*'s Said al-Ghazali visited sites of four recent grabs and spoke to the victims.

Thousands of Dunums Grabbed in Ramallah, Hebron Districts

The Israeli authorities are distributing military orders to confiscate thousands of dunums in Ramallah, Beitunia and Rafat in the Ramallah district and among the residents of Kharas and Beitula in the Hebron district.

The confiscations are being issued on a variety of pretexts — military purposes, for settlement construction or because the Israeli authorities claimed it as government property. Hundreds of people have have lost their property and livelihoods, others could follow as today's grab orders do not have precise delineations. Many of them were issued verbally.

Over 46 Beitula residents were handed military grab orders, November 23. If they go through, the village will lose 1000 dunums in the 'Wadi Deir' and 'Baten Sharqi' areas. Confiscation Order Number 83/19-B told landowners to go take their *tabu* documents, land property tax registration documents and maps to the military headquarters to register for compensation. Owners were told to sign copies of the maps to indicate acceptance.

Ahmad Lutfi Othman, mayor of Beitunia, told *Al Fajr* that cultivated and built-up areas were included in the confiscation zone. Othman said that the land falls within municipality borders. The Israeli authorities ignored the municipality, which has still not been officially notified of the confiscation, he said.

Beitunia landowners are petitioning the High Court to get their property back. The mayor predicts a settlement will be built on the confiscated land.

Sarieh Musa al-Khatib, from Beitunia, who stands to lose all her 20 dunums, told *Al Fajr* that she will not accept any compensation. "This is my land, which I inherited from my father. It will remain my property. I will not agree on any compromise," she said.

Six months ago, the Israelis confiscated 1000 dunums of orchards in the Beitunia mountains.

In Ramallah over 130 residents received confiscation orders for their land in Khalet Taiemeh and Wadi Deir where it intersects with Beitunia, Ramallah and Rafat.

Abu Wadieh, the Ramallah municipality secretary, told *Al Fajr* that the custodian of absentee property told the municipality he was grabbing seven dunums of its land in Khalet Taeimeh for "military purposes." Abu Wadieh refused to comment on the confiscation. He said that Israeli authorities recently expanded municipal boundaries to include Khalet Taeimeh and Wadi Deir, and this contradicts the confiscation order. Samih Mayeya, a legal accountant in Ramallah who lost 1064 square metres in Khalet Taeimeh, told *Al Fajr* that he applied recently for a building permit for his land. He has nowhere else to make a home for himself. Mayeya said that his land is not a subject to bargaining.

As Ramallans and Beitunians were losing their land, Rafat *mukhtar* Wajeh Abd al-Mutaleb received an order grabbing the Bir Deir Gharbi and Baten Meghra hills from the village, an area of 900 dunums. An official from the custodian of absentee property office went to the village, November 15, and handed the *mukhtar* Confiscation Order 83/19-T, the *mukhtar* reported. He said he refused to sign it.

The order mandates the *mukhtar* to notify over 40 family in the village about the confiscation of their land.

The confiscated land there is located northeast of a military camp which was established on the village's agricultural lands. That area is fenced and reaches right up to houses in the village.

In 1968 and 1980, the village lost over 2000 dunums to the military camps and apart from the built-up area itself, the village now has no land left.

Residents say they feel trapped. They are surrounded by other Arab villages: Jadereh in the south, Ramallah in the north, the 'green line' in the west and al-Bireh in the east. The authorities have outlawed new construction between existing houses. A 150-metre-wide street cuts a swathe through the village land and is now threatening 25 houses with demolition.

Abd al-Latif Mohammed Jaber, 60, a worker, told *Al Fajr* that he lost all his 12 dunums of land after the last grab. Another worker, aged 30, who asked that his name not be used, said only one small area now remains to the villagers and even on this they cannot build. "We are now like birds in a cage," he said The confiscated land is in a crescent shape around the village on the north, west and south sides."

The *mukhtar* of Rafat, Wajeh Abd al-Mutaleb, has written an open letter condemning the land grab. "Land expropriation," the *mukhtar* wrote, "deprives the residents of their sources of livelihood." He appealed for local and international pressure to interfere to end the confiscation.

In another land grab, the Israeli authorities confiscated over 2000 dunums from Kharas village, northwest of Hebron. The village *mukhtar* and the chairman of the local council were notified verbally of the confiscation, November 24. Landowners were immediately prevented from entering the confiscation zone. The confiscated lands include regions of Taraf Sheikh, Shaab Edwan, Khalet Beiah, Rasam and Khalet Sarara. More than 30 families own land in the area.

To top off a busy week, the Israeli authorities confiscated between 4000 and 6000 dunums from Beitula on the grounds that it is state land.

The Bitter Year — *Arabs Under Israeli Occupation in 1982*, by Eric Hoogland. Arab-American Anti-Discrimination Committee, Washington DC, 1983.

The Bitter Year is the Arab-American Anti-Discrimination Committee's first venture into human rights documentation. It gets a qualified thumbs-up from *Al Fajr*'s Nura Sus.

"The Bitter Year": More Documentation

The Palestinian problem has never lacked for documentation. There may be more books, PhD dissertations, memoires, films, newspaper and magazine articles about the Palestinian-Israeli conflict — for both educators and laity — than about any other 'national problem'. The plethora has even provoked jokes about the last remaining unresearched topic: 'Elephants and the Palestinian Question', for instance.

After 35 years, thousands of volumes and billions of words, you do not have to be a cynic to realise that Palestine has remained an unsolved problem clearly out of intention rather than ignorance of the particulars. No one can genuinely say, "I didn't know."

There is definite need, of course, to impart current information on Israel's behaviour toward Palestinians to the world beyond the Middle East, and particularly to friends in solidarity with the Palestinian people. There is not much use, on the other hand, in compiling statistics as ammunition for Palestinian-Israeli public relations debates.

In this mood, we read *The Bitter Year* — *Arabs Under Israeli Occupation in 1982*, which the authors — the Arab-American Anti-Discrimination Committee — say gives a "detailed record of the sufferings of our people" in that one disastrous year. The compilation is cleverly modelled on the US State Department's own country reports on human rights practices, "making possible a section-by-section comparison with the 1982 State Department report on Israeli practices in occupied Arab land." The choice of this format is either a political lampoon on the part of writer and coordinator Eric Hoogland or a naive appeal to any genuine humanitarian who may still lurk in the US government. The main point of the book is that these human rights violations are made possible through the benevolent and massive subsidies of the US government.

The 88-page text outlines human rights violations in harassment, arrest, imprisonment and collective punishment used by Israel against the people whose land it occupies. A dozen reports from Amnesty International, affidavits submitted by clients of Israeli lawyer Felicia Langer and articles from Palestinian and Israeli newspapers give selected details on prison conditions, torture, curfews, land grabs, house destructions, town arrests, censorship and outright political intimidation in Lebanon, the Golan, the West Bank and the Gaza Strip. Three-fourths of the newspaper accounts are from *Al Fajr* English newspaper, sometimes referred to as *The Dawn*. Some attempt is made in the last 10 pages of text to give a general picture of the underdevelopment and undermining of health, education, economic and social circumstances as well. The final two-thirds of the book is given over to appendices of stark testimony from victims and eyewitnesses.

As documentation the effort is, unfortunately, unreliable: (*administrative detention*, p. 25 reads, "During 1982 more than 250 Palestinian and Syrian Arabs were detained for periods of time varying from several hours to several months," but the number of university students alone who were administratively detained during 1982 would exceed this number!); internally inconsistent (*fatal shootings*, p. 20 cites 26 but pp. 117-18 numbers only 18; *curfews*, p. 17 says there were 45 separate curfews but p. 87 only 16; *POWs in Lebanon*, p. 22 states 8000 but p. 26 only 7000 currently being held, etc.); spotty (is it possible to write a book about the events of 1982 without mentioning the shooting sprees at al-Aqsa Mosque, April 11, which left two dead and scores wounded?) and incorrect (the affidavit in Appendix A said to have been submitted to attorney Felicia Langer was actually given to attorney Lea Tsemel). I could also add the friendly criticism that the authors were overly dependent on the files of attorney Langer and the Israeli League for Human and Civil Rights. A broader range of sources would have increased their credibility.

I should emphasise that these errors are in the direction of understatement rather than exaggeration. The numbers are not large enough, the sweep not wide enough in scope and the descriptions not detailed enough, but *The Bitter Year* lends a sense of scope that day-to-day struggle hides.

1982 was indeed a bitter year, in a succession of bitter years, for all Palestinians and other Arabs everywhere, but directly for those who live or came under Israeli rule. The bitterness does not begin where the borders of the Israeli state leave off, however. Beduin Palestinians in the Naqab and Palestinians in the 'Judaised' Galilee and circumscribed Triangle also lost lives, land and livelihood to the state of Israel during the year. Their repression may be more subtle, but it would have been important to point out that the mass violation of human rights continues well past the invasion (Lebanon), occupation (West Bank and Gaza) and annexation (Golan) stages of colonial rule.

Despite the criticisms, however, *The Bitter Year* is an honest attempt to collate information from a variety of disparate sources. It will be a good jumping-off point for researchers and if research techniques are tightened up in future years it could indeed become an invaluable and comprehensive record.

The Bitter Year is available from the Arab-American Anti-Discrimination Committee, 1731 Connecticut Ave, NW Suite 400, Washington DC, 20009, USA; no price listed.

WEST BANK HOMES, BUSINESSES UNDER ATTACK

HALHOUL MONIES BLOCKED BY 'DEVELOPMENT FUND'

Work on a long-planned vegetable market at Halhoul ground to a halt when Hijazzi Modieh, the acting mayor of Halhoul, was banned from bringing JD100,000 over the bridge, September 28. The banning is the latest step in Israel's attempt to cream off development money to its own projects.

Modieh said the Jordanian authorities will not issue funds for transfer to the occupied territories through the "Judea and Samaria Development Fund," in which the Israeli occupation authorities insist all cash from abroad must be deposited.

After this latest move, prominent West Bank mayors, unionists, lawyers and other professionals expressed resentment about the implementation of the fund. Palestinian nationalists considered this step a "real barrier in developing the West Bank economic structure."

Military Order 973, which legalised the "Development Fund in Judea and Samaria," placed restrictions on those who bring in funds from "enemy sources." Under its clauses, the PLO, Jordan or any other Arab country which does not have normal relations with Israel is considered 'enemy.' The military order obliges any person who wants to bring money from 'enemy' sources to get a prior permit from the 'civil administration.' The funds then are to be deposited in the "Judea and Samaria Development Fund."

The authorities have, under their regulations, the option to take part of the money for Israeli-defined development purposes. The percentage they will skim off has not been made public. No accounts have been published for the fund since it was established. Last month, a foreign journalist was told by Israeli officials in the 'civil administration' that they take 30 percent of all cash. Palestinians believe the cash is used for settlement projects.

Attorney Jonathan Kuttab, the co-partner in the Ramallah-based Law in the Service of Man, told *Al Fajr*: "We do not know of any person who brought in money and deposited it in the development funds."

A month ago, the Israeli authorities confiscated the official and personal cheque books of Hanna Attrash, the mayor of Beit Sahour, and told him that he cannot bring money from Jordan except through the "Development Fund." Attrash had earlier publicly hosted 'civil administration' General Shlomo Elia at Beit Sahour. Then Elia told him he could bring in funds from Jordan.

Ibrahim Dakkak, the chairman of the West Bank Engineers Union and a leading local development expert, told *Al Fajr* that MO 973 closes the circle of control over the West Bank through expropriation of land, water, energy and now money. "This will hamper the process of development and confine services to the exclusive preserve of the Israeli authorities," he said.

Israel Radio reported, last week, that Dr Issa Salti brought US$1 million into the West Bank and deposited it in the Israeli fund. Salti intends to build a hospital in Ramallah. Salti, known locally for his pro-Jordanian sympathies, refused to comment on the reports when called by *Al Fajr*.

Ruins of West Bank home demolished by Israeli military authorities earlier this year. On November 6 an Issawiyyah home was destroyed on the pretext that the owner had no building permit.

HOUSE DESTROYED DESPITE PERMIT REQUEST

Israeli forces demolished a house in Issawiyyah, Jerusalem, November 6, on the pretext that the owner had no building license. Farm buildings in the same area were threatened.

Isma'il Saleh Hamdan, 36, who works as a teacher of mechanics, told *Al Fajr* that six military vehicles carrying 40 soldiers and policemen accompanied the bulldozer which demolished his 60-square-meter house of two rooms and a kitchen. Hamdan told *Al Fajr* that prior to the operation, a 'civil administration' officer called 'Avner' and the Israeli inspector of construction, Yosi Hasoun, ordered him to remain at home, November 6, to receive a visit of the Israeli officer in charge of zoning.

On November 5, Hamdan says, he went to the military governorate in Bethlehem where the military governor told him that the Israelis have no intention of destroying his house. Hamdan, who is the sole support for five members of his family, said that he applied for a license 16 months ago but he has not yet received an answer. He added that he and members of his family had earlier attempted to get a license for another plot of land but the Israeli authorities confiscated it in 1979. Hamdan said the house cost him JD7500 to build. The Israelis issued two warnings on July 29, 1983 and September 27, 1983.

The house stands opposite of Issawiyyah village on the other side of a new Israeli road. The International Committee of the Red Cross has given the family a tent. Hamdan told *Al Fajr* that Israeli representatives have told him that the reason they want the house downed is because it is built near "land owned by Jews."

Advocate Aziz Shehadeh applied last week to Moshe Aknin, of the military's higher zoning council, asking him to cancel the demolition order for humanitarian reasons. Aknin turned down his application. Hamdan's neighbour, farmowner Radi Ahmad Nasser, 32, has also been given demolition orders on his home and farm buildings. His lawyer has obtained a temporary restraining order against the authorities. He and his brothers applied for a licence in the summer of 1980.

Hani Issawi, a resident in the village, told *Al Fajr* that the Israeli authorities are opening a 48-meter-wide road through village land to join settlements to Jerusalem. Villagers told *Al Fajr* that 18,000 dunums — virtually all the village's land — has been grabbed since 1967. They said the village, including the built-up area, is only 1000 dunums. The Israelis prevent any extension of construction beyond the new road, they say.

Residents also point out that part of the village itself is a "closed military area."

Open market in Hebron: local merchants have been hard hit by tax raids carried out by Israeli authorities.

Hebron Merchants Taxed Dry

Israeli tax collectors made a series of raids on Hebron merchants, this week. On November 2, teams of officials distributed tax demands in the Qazazin and Bab Zawiyeh quarters. Two days later, they moved in on jewelry shops, confiscating gold and bracelets. Haj Mohammed Sharif, a local jeweler, said taxmen have been making the rounds of jewellers for the past month, examining stock and demanding account books.

Mohammed Nimr Hasouneh, a merchant in Qazazin quarter, told *Al Fajr* that over 65 merchants were handed demands for between IS10,000-200,000.

Hasouneh, who owns a small grocery, said his bill was for IS140,000. Another merchant who refused to give his name said, "it is unbelievable, especially when there is obvious stagnation in the market."

A furniture store owner in Bab al-Zawiyeh told *Al Fajr*, "I challenge them to come and see how much we sell every day. They should confiscate our shops and pay us so that we can feed our families."

Naim Hasouneh, owner of a large grocery shop, complained that the major devaluation of the shekel has hit both merchants and customers hard.

Suleiman Horoub told *Al Fajr* that about a dozen jewelry shop owners were taken to the customs department in Hebron and interrogated about untariffed gold. Horoub said that he paid IS215,000 as tariff because he bought bracelets from local residents. Horoub told *Al Fajr* that the customs men confiscated more than one kilogramme of gold belonging to Abd al-Ghafar Natshe, closed his shop and imprisoned him for three days last week.

Abu Abed Ja'abari, owner of a Jerusalem taxi office, told *Al Fajr* that the taxmen are also imposing "unbelievable" taxes on drivers. He said one driver, Shukri Said, who works the Hebron-Jerusalem route, received a demand for IS90,000.

IN HALHOUL

Licensed Buildings Demolished

The deputy military governor of Hebron notified the acting mayor of Halhoul, Hijazzi Modieh, October 14, of the intention of Israeli authorities to demolish two licensed houses and one stone-cutting plant in the town. The officer said the buildings would be razed "for public purposes."

The acting mayor told *Al Fajr* that he licensed the two houses four months ago and the stone-cutting plant was licensed in April 1972. He described the proposed demolitions as "arbitrary and a direct attack against the municipality. In fact, they want to demolish the municipality itself by interfering in its affairs," Modieh stated.

An Israeli engineer called "Abu Yusef" came from the military occupation offices at Beit El two weeks ago and asked the acting mayor to withdraw the three licenses. Modieh refused. The Israelis say they want to run a road through the area where the buildings stand.

The acting military governor told the owner of the cutting plant, Ahmad Mohammed Abu Rmighan, he would be charged the cost of the demolition if he did not dismantle his equipment. The two houses belong to Naji Ali Abdullah Abu Rayan and Abu al-Mahdi Abu Rayan.

The owners have appealed to the Israeli authorities to cancel the decision.

Israel's Anti-Education Policy

MILITARY TO SCREEN TEACHERS, FREEZE FUNDS AT GAZA U.

Israeli military authorities ordered, October 1, 100 lecturers at the Gaza Islamic University, all local ID holders, to obtain permits from the military governor before teaching at the university. The new order, which the authorities say is based on Egyptian Order Number 380, was condemned by officials at the university as an interference in higher education.

University officials say the order is equivalent to West Bank Military Order 854. MO 854, enacted in 1980, would give Israel control over who teaches and studies in local universities and over the curriculum. The military have backed away from attempts to implement it in the face of total opposition.

Attempts to impose the new Gaza order began in the middle of September. In a letter sent by the Israeli officer who heads the 'civil administration' in Gaza, September 14, the authorities notified the university's board of trustees that they must obtain the military authorities' approval for every teacher they hire. The letter, which came after the board of trustees requested residency permits for nearly 90 lecturers who do not hold West Bank or Gaza ID cards, stated the granting of permits was conditional on the teachers' compliance with new regulations.

Meanwhile, in what is seen as an effort to pressure the board of trustees to accept their demands, the Israeli authorities refused to approve the Gaza University's quarterly budget. As a result, no salaries were paid for September. Ahmad Hassan Shawwa, board chairman, told *Al Fajr* that the military authorities' approval is a necessary prerequisite to bringing in money from their accounts in Jordan. The authorities' consent is also necessary for withdrawal from local banks.

At the same time, the military authorities in every city in the Gaza Strip were summoning lecturers and pressing them to petition for the permits. Some lecturers signed papers in Hebrew. They said they were told by Israeli officers that the papers noted their wish not to petition for a permit. The exact nature of the Hebrew document is not clear.

The latest moves were unanimously rejected by the board of trustees, the university administration council and the employees' union. In a letter addressed to the 'civil administration' head in Gaza, the board of trustees said "the conditions set for employing lecturers at the university is an obstacle curtailing the development of higher education in the Strip. Such regulations have not been enforced in any part of the world," the letter stated.

The employees union issued a statement in support of the board of trustees. They condemned the Israeli act as an "infringement of the academic and administrative rights of the university." The employees union called on local public institutions and figures to "exert pressure on the authorities in order to get the decision rescinded."

Mohammed Nofal, secretary of the employees union, argued that the Egyptian Order 380 which the authorities are using "is inapplicable to the Islamic University." He explained that the order, which was enacted in 1954, applied to the al-Azhar Religious Institute, which is a government-run elementary school. He pointed out that the Gaza University, which was established in 1978, is a private institution of higher education and ought to be administered and run independently.

The Islamic University, which now enrolls more than 3500 students, has been under strong pressure since it opened. A perennial problem is refusal of the Israelis to allow money in from Jordan. This has periodically left the institution in virtual bankruptcy.

Blackmail at Gaza University

Two senior officials at the Islamic University in Gaza were summoned to the military governorate, October 17, and told the university must comply with an earlier order to dismiss six teachers or the institution would not be given permission to use funds recently deposited in its account.

Ahmad Hassan Shawwa, member of the board of trustees, and Mohammed Saqi, university president, said they informed the Israeli officials that the university's board of trustees had decided, at its September 22 meeting, to reject the military order as an interference in university affairs and that they stuck by the decision. Israeli authorities had informed the Islamic University by letter in mid-September that six faculty members were forbidden to give any more lectures at the university. The teachers — Ismail Bulbul, Abd al-Aziz Odeh, Ramadan Shalah, Fathi Subuh, Ahmad Dahlan and Suleiman Odeh — are lecturers in Islamic law, education and Arabic language. No reason was indicated for the order to dismiss the teachers.

Israeli authorities allowed the university to bring into Gaza US$1,000,000 two months ago, claiming Article 380 of Egyptian law, issued in 1954, regulating the affairs of religious institutions in Gaza as their legal basis. Since then it has frozen the money.

Bethlehem University student council offices: students went on strike, October 28, to protest the detention of fellow students.

BETHLEHEM STUDENTS PROTEST STUDENT DETENTIONS

Bethlehem University students went on strike, October 28, for three days to protest the detention of eight members of the student council and the arrest of 11 others. The decision was taken at a meeting of hundreds of students to discuss recent "acts of aggression" against the university. A two-hour sit-in strike was held on campus immediately after the meeting.

A day earlier all the secretaries of the students council committees and the secretaries and some members of the council-sponsored clubs were summoned to police headquarters where they were interrogated. Released students said questioning centered on alleged inciting materials and a Palestinian flag confiscated at the Palestinian folklore exhibition at the university a week earlier. Eleven students were released after seven hours of interrogation and eight were kept in detention on charges of raising a Palestinian flag and "exhibiting inciting books, cassettes of Palestinian music, posters and several tear gas canisters," according to student sources. Lamis Essawi, secretary of the folklore club, was interrogated about the organisation of the festival and its contents. "I did not know about the Palestinian flag," she said, "but I refused to be released on bail."

Israeli troops confiscated the material for which students are being charged on October 21, in a midnight raid of the exhibit. The raid, a university statement said, "intrudes on the normal functioning of the university." Lamis Essawi told *Al Fajr* that the exhibit included agricultural implements, traditional clothes and utensils, as well as modern artifacts.

The students who are still in prison are: Nidal Abu Zuluf, head of the students council; Mohammed Manasra, students council secretary; Nizar Mahayek, treasurer; Abd al-Wahab Alawneh, secretary of the arts club; Hassan Abu Tayeb, secretary of the social club; Ahmad Abu Fathia, secretary of the cultural club; Ahmad Radwan, the treasurer of the heritage club; and Samir Abu Tour, a member of the heritage club.

Bir Zeit University Mourns Martyrs

Two thousand students attended a memorial ceremony for three matyred PLO officials — Majed Abu Sharar, Said Sayel and Haj Sami Abu Ghosh — at Bir Zeit University, October 18.

Ceremony organisers gave obituaries for the three men and students recited appropriate poetry.

Abu Sharar, head of the PLO Unified Information Service, died in a bomb explosion in his hotel room in Rome in October 1981. He was attending an international journalists conference. Abu Ghosh, a PFLP Central Committee member, was killed during an air raid on Beirut in July 1981. Sayel, PLO chief of staff, was killed by a car bomb explosion near his headquarters in the Beqa'a in September 1982 after the PLO's departure from Beirut.

BZU Student Leader, Employee Detained

Bir Zeit University Student Council President Nayef Sweitat and an employee in BZU's literacy project, Sami Khadr, are being held without charges.

Sweitat was summoned to military headquarters in Jenin, October 12, on the pretext of receiving a town arrest restriction. There he was arrested. An appeal by his lawyer for him to be released on bail will be heard on October 19.

Sami Khadr was detained for 14 days, October 10, after several summonses to the military headquarters in Ramallah. Two days later he was remanded for 12 days for further questioning.

Adel Yahia, a teacher in the BZU Middle East Studies department, and three students spent one day in Ramallah prison, October 13. No charges were mentioned.

Albert Aghazarian, head of the public relations department at BZU, described the campaign of arrests as "arbitrary" and said "they have become part of our daily life."

On the bright side, Aghazarian said that the university administration's work over the past three months to get back 30 students' ID cards was finally resolved, October 12.

Bassam Shaka'a, the deposed mayor of Nablus, is for many Western journalists and diplomats *the* man to see on the West Bank. *Al Fajr's* Said al-Ghazaleh recently interviewed the mayor at his besieged home about his personal history.

Bassam Shaka'a: Voice For Palestinian National Aspirations

Bassam Ahmad Shaka'a, 53, maimed by a car bomb in 1980, then dismissed as mayor of Nablus two years later, is the one mayor among the 12 deposed in the West Bank who has aroused continuous anger, fear and harassment of the Israeli military authorities. A natural leader, Shaka'a has remained outspoken and active, despite the heavy restrictions put on him. The Israelis have labelled 'Abu Nidal' a "dangerous political inciter." Pro-Western journalists often describe him in dispatches as a "radical political figure" in the West Bank.

For the Palestinian people in the occupied territories, however, the people Shaka'a represents, he is the chief spokesperson for their national aspirations. For many he is symbolic of Israeli occupation policy since 1967. Shaka'a himself is an ordinary Palestinian, one whose interests lie in the political, military, cultural and historical changes under occupation.

Whenever I visit Skaha'a at his home in Rafidiya quarter, a quiet, wealthy and well-designed neighbourhood, built in a beautifully terraced area west of Nablus, I find five or six soldiers in a military jeep stationed in front of his one-storey house. Soldiers stop visitors and register all personal data. They only allow me in after conversation with their senior officers in military headquarters in Nablus.

The last time I went, the Swiss Consul in Jerusalem was visiting the mayor, and several Nablus residents and others from out of town had come to consult Shaka'a about their own affairs. A middle-aged woman came and asked for a private meeting. Shaka'a spent five minutes listening to her. Before he returned, a young man in his 30s who had come to ask for help for his sick father in Rafidiya Hospital commented: "Shaka'a is still our recognised elected mayor in theory and practice."

He came out walking slowly on his artificial legs. The woman left, her eyes happy. Shaka'a listened to each visitor.

People in the occupied territories know a great deal about Shaka'a's political attitudes but they know little about his personal life. Shaka'a believes his life history is important only as an illustration of the situation Palestinians live. He has been imprisoned by the Syrians, Jordanians and Israelis. "My life is a reflection of all the events that have occurred in Palestine. It is a political mirror," he explains.

Bassam Shaka'a was born in Nablus, December 10, 1930. He was the youngest of five brothers. He has six sisters. His father, Ahmad Shaka'a, occupied an important social, political and economic position in Nablus. Shaka'a's father owned a soap factory in Nablus, a citrus plantation, more than 1000 dunums of land, buildings and shops and the Ghamata Cinema.

The elder Shaka'a was the chairman of the chamber of commerce for several years before 1948 and a permanent vice mayor at the municipality. Bassam Shaka'a says: "My father was not a professional politician, but he formed his political views in reaction to political events and general public opinion. Ahmad supported the political views of al-Defa'a Party *. In the 1936 revolution, my father was an active man. I used to see many revolutionaries coming to my father's house every night. As a child this experience had its effect on me," Shaka'a said.

Ahmad Shaka'a built the first secondary school in Nablus in 1919, called Najah Secondary School. The school was relatively big and had an evening study programme. It was a Palestinian national school in its administration and curriculum. The famous poet Abd al-Rahim Mahmoud ** and the well-known historian Izzat Darwaza were teachers at the school. Shaka'a pointed out that Abd al-Rahim Mahmoud did not stick to the curriculum — he was a teacher of Arabic language, but he used to give students lessons in history and the Palestinian cause.

Shaka'a himself studied at Najah. He was, like many young Palestinians, an active nationalist. He shared in the demonstrations with his schoolmates against land confiscation and Jewish immigration. Shaka'a pointed out that the Palestinian national consciousness at that time was not strong or well-formed because Palestinian people considered themselves "Arabs" only. Only Abd al-Qader Husseini *** , he said, understood the particular conditions of the Palestinian cause and waged the struggle, depending mainly on the Palestinians.

Shaka'a witnessed the formation of an Arab Salvation Army, in 1947, which came "to save Palestine." Shaka'a criticised this army for not properly carrying out its tasks. In 1948, the Arab armies replaced it and lost Palestine by insisting on disarming the Palestinian people and signing secret agreements with enemies.

Bassam Shaka'a: a lifetime devoted to his native Nablus and the Palestinian cause.

In 1950, reactionary Palestinian figures convened a conference in Jericho and agreed to the annexation of the West Bank to Jordan. Shaka'a was active in political life after the defeat of 1948: "I am a member of the mass movement which was affected by the 1948 disaster." In 1950, the Palestinian nationalists held an anti-Jericho conference in Nablus, in which they condemned the annexation of the West Bank to Jordan and stated that annexation of the West Bank must be made conditional upon achieving liberation.

By the beginning of the 50s, the old family parties were dissolved and new parties, such as Ba'athists, the communists and the Arab national movement, were active in Palestine. In 1952, Bassam Shaka'a joined the Ba'athist Party and remained an active cadre for seven years.

The national ideas and Arab unity, the main philosophies of the Ba'athists, attracted hundreds of Palestinians to the party. Shaka'a had a dispute with the leadership of the party in 1959 and he resigned, during the second Ba'athist general conference in Beirut. In that conference, Shaka'a supported the unification of Eygpt and Syria.

In 1957, after the sacking of the national government in Jordan headed by Suleiman Nabulsi, Shaka'a was chased by the Jordanian authorities, and he worked underground for 30 months. He was responsible for the Nablus and Irbed branch. From 1959 to 1962, he sought political refuge in Syria. Six months after the separation between Syria and Egypt, he was imprisoned for 20 days in Mazeh jail and then deported to Lebanon. He travelled to Egypt, where he remained for three years. In 1965, after a royal pardon, Shaka'a returned to Nablus. In Nablus he worked in agriculture and supervised the citrus groves of his family. In 1966, Shaka'a and three of his brothers were imprisoned for 19 days in Zarqa prison. The Jordanian authorities put the responsibility for the demonstrations in Nablus on the Shaka'a family ****.

After 1967, Shaka'a was an active member in various political and social guiding committees in West Bank towns. Shaka'a said that Israeli authorities deported most of these committee activists. Shaka'a reiterated that he did not belong to any political organisation at that time: "I had no clear political role."

In the first days of the occupation, Shaka'a was imprisoned for one day on charges of entering the country illegally. Hamdi Kana'an, Shaka'a's uncle, was mayor of Nablus at that time.

In 1976, after the formal resignation of the municipal councils, Shaka'a found himself concerned about the approaching municipal elections. Many individuals and political groups put pressure on Shaka'a to convince him to head the national bloc. Shaka'a recalls his start in official political life: "I did not have the intention to run in the elections. It was only a few hours before the closure of the nomination period that I decided to nominate myself as the head of the national bloc."

Shaka'a-Masri Dispute

Allegations that there is a running dispute between the Shaka'a's and the Masri's, the two most powerful Nablus families, are untrue, says Shaka'a. The story has been formed by the Israeli authorities, who attempted to create this dispute. Shaka'a cited the following example. The Israeli deputy military governor in Nablus summoned him to a meeting at the military governorate in 1976; he described the meeting as secret and very important. During the meeting, Shaka'a said, the deputy governor said that his investigations into the wave of the demonstrations in Nablus prove that the Masri family, the pro-Jordanians, wanted to create disturbances and difficulties for Shaka'a, to make him unsuccessful as mayor.

Shaka'a answered in his characteristic straightforward manner: "I do not forget the fact that I am an elected mayor and you are a military governor." Shaka'a learned later that the military governor had floated the same suggestion to Hikmat Masri, clan leader and now head of Najah University. Shaka'a said: "The Israeli authorities did not know that I call 12 men among the Masri family 'uncle.' "

Shaka'a in Jail

In his third year as mayor, by the end of 1979, Shaka'a was imprisoned for 26 days and was under threat of deportation, accused of supporting 'terrorism', and specifically the military operation carried out along the coast of Palestine in 1978. Shaka'a described what happened:

General Matt, the military coordinator of the occupied territories, in the company of his aides, came to the Nablus municipality to discuss its affairs. "When we talked about prisoners," Shaka'a said, "I said that there was a difference between security detainees and criminals. Matt mentioned the shore operation and pursued the discussion intently. He described the *fedayeen* as child-killers, but I told him that they came to liberate their comrades in Israeli jails and not to kill children. The Israeli Army attacked them, causing casualties."

After the meeting, Matt termed the conversation 'positive' and pointed out the democracy of the occupation. Shaka'a pointed out that "no democracy with occupation is possible." A few hours later, a military spokesperson said that Shaka'a supported the killers of children, and the Israeli Knesset discussed the matter in a special session. The ministry of defence recommended the formation of an investigative committee.

Shaka'a was arrested, and all expected that the Israeli authorities would deport him. His lawyer obtained an order *nisi* from the High Court to block his deportation. The West bank municipal councils threatened to resign, and all Palestine boiled with demonstrations, strikes and popular protests.

In jail, Shaka'a started a hunger strike and sent memoranda to the ministry of defence and the prime minister refusing the conclusions of the ministry of defence and stressing that what he had said was part of his right of self-expression. Under heavy international pressure, a special military investigative committee recommended the cancellation of the decision to deport Shaka'a.

In June 1980, one month after Israel expelled two other West Bank mayors, Bassam Shaka'a narrowly escaped death, along with two other mayors — Ibrahim Tawil, mayor of al-Bireh, and Karim Khalaf, mayor of Ramallah — when bombs triggered by their car ignitions exploded almost simultaneously. Shaka'a lost both legs and Khalaf lost a foot. Tawil escaped unharmed.

Inaya Shaka'a

Inaya Shaka'a, 45, Bassam's wife, is a permanent secretary to her husband. She types all her husband's statements, reads his letters, shares his political views and discusses politics with his guests. She is a real support to the mayor.

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** Al-Defa'a was a family party allied with the influential Nashashibi clan. It supported the division of Palestine and it was considered pro-Jordanian and pro-British.*

*** Abd al-Rahim Mahmoud, a prominent Palestinian poet, was killed in a battle called al-Shajara (the tree) in the Galilee.*

**** Abd al-Qader Husseini was a Palestinian military leader at the forefront of the struggle against Zionism in Palestine in the 1930's and '40's. He was killed in a famous battle at Qastel, near Jerusalem, a few days after the Deir Yassin massacre in 1947.*

***** In 1966 a wave of demonstrations swept the West Bank to demand arms from the Jordanian government. The spark was an Israeli air raid on Samouh village, near Hebron. Three Palestinians were killed in these demonstrations and many were injured or jailed.*

To the Editor,

Waiting for Godot in Nablus

by Jesse Zel Lurie

My name is Jesse Zel Lurie. I am the retired editor and publisher of the *Haddasah Magazine*, the largest Jewish periodical in the world, with a monthly, circulation of 370,000. My record as a Zionist editor and reporter goes back 49 years to 1934.

On my last visit to Israel, in June of this year, I interviwed Mustafa Dudeen, then head of the Village Leagues, on an assignment for the Jewish Telegraphic Agency. After my interview with Dudeen, he left for a luncheon apointment with two jeep-loads of Israeli soldiers fore and aft of his sedan.

I thought this might be an extravagant use of Israeli military power which would hardly enhance Dudeen's reputation among the Arabs of the West Bank. I mentioned this to Mort Dolinsky, head of the government press office. He told me that the protection given to Dudeen was not unusual — the same jeep-loads of soldiers are provided to protect Bassam Shaka'a and several other former mayors on the West Bank.

Israeli soldiers protecting Bassam Shaka'a, allegedly the leading supporter of the PLO on the West Bank, seemed to me to be an odd story, and I filed the information away for future reference. At a party in Tel Aviv last Saturday night, I met an Israeli Arab journalist from the village of Taibe, Ibrahim Abd al-Kadr. I asked Ibrahim whether he knew Bassam Shaka'a and whether he could arrange for me to see him. He said he did and he would, and we arranged to meet in Jerusalem on Monday, yesterday.

We left Jerusalem at 5:00 pm and arrived at Bassam Shaka'a's home, in Nablus, a few minutes after 6:00 pm. In front of his home stood a jeep with four border guards. Unfortunately, it turned out these soldiers were not there to protect him, as I had been told, but to harass him illegally and to prevent him from seeing invited guests, particularly journalists.

In South Africa there is a banning law by which a person whom the South African government considers to be a security risk can be legally prevented from seeing visitors. This law may be contrary to the human rights convention, but it is the law of the land in South Africa.

What is the law in the West Bank? A (person who is a) security risk can be placed under house arrest and prevented from seeing visitors. Bassam Shaka'a is not under house arrest. He can leave his home any time he wishes. What happened to me yesterday was not only illegal but ludicrous. It was like a scene from (Samuel Beckett's) *Waiting for Godot*. The almost empty stage was the open field in front of Bassam Shaka'a's home. The backdrop was the imposing gateway to Bassam Shaka'a's mansion.

The border guards asked for our documents. They took down the number of Ibrahim's identity card and of my passport and transmitted this information on a walkie-talkie to their base. After a few minutes word came from the base that Ibrahim was 'OK' and could enter. I assume they punched his number into a computer and found his record. "But what about this American journalist with a camera?" asked the soldier. "Wait," was the reply.

My name was not in the computer and it was a long wait in the cold night. Meanwhile Bassam Shaka'a came to the gate on his two canes, and we exchanged a few words. His wife, Anaya, brought us coffee.

At 7:00 pm, after fifty minutes of standing in the cold, word came that we could not enter Bassam Shaka'a's home. This was an illegal order, and we drove to the base to find the man at the other end of the walkie-talkie who had made the decision. We never did.

From the gatehouse of the Nablus base we talked on the phone to a man who identified himself as Reuben. I talked to him in Hebrew, which surprised him. "Are you Jewish?" he asked. "Of course," I replied. "If you're Jewish, what do you have to do with Bassam Shaka'a?" He said to call him back in 15 minutes and hung up.

I was cold and needed a bathroom so I wandered inside. I was directed to the *sherutim* and then we found the office of the 'civil administration' duty officer.

The duty officer proved to be a charming Druze major named Seren Jihad. The officer took my Israeli government press card and disappeared for about 10 minutes while we talked to a woman soldier from Dimona. When he returned, Seren Jihad was not so charming. He said that we would have to wait outside the gate for an answer. He did not know how long it would take.

After 10-15 minutes, Seren Jihad emerged with the woman soldier. "Not yet," he said to me, as they disappeared around the building.

We waited some more. By 8:00 pm, two hours after our arrival, I was not only tired but hungry. I suggested to Ibrahim that we go to a restuarant and come back. He said that all the restuarants were closed at this hour. We decided to go back to the Shaka'a's, say goodbye at the gate, and head for Jerusalem.

Back we drove, and once more Mr and Mrs Shaka'a came to the gate. But this time they brought tables and chairs, wonderful-tasting *pita* filled with scrambled eggs, tomatoes, and olives and some hot tea and a bowl of fruit.

As we enjoyed this hot repast in the cold night air, I asked Bassam Shaka'a: "What would happen to me if I walked into your house with you without permission from the guards?"

"The British Consul in Jerusalem tried that," he replied. "The soldier came in after him and told the consul that if he didn't leave he would be carried out."

On our way back to Jerusalem, we stopped at the Beit El headquarters of the 'civil administration.' The duty officer, Lieutenant Eyal, called the spokeswoman, Elise, on the phone. I asked her under what law, regulation or administrative order I had been stopped from visiting Bassam Shaka'a's home.

Elise said that she would get back to me this morning with a reply. I believe that the treatment of Bassam Shaka'a as if he were under house arrest is illegal. I also believe that the rule of law is the chief bastion of democracy, and without the rule of law, democracy falls.

I have therefore asked the Association for Civil Rights in Israel, which is supportd by the New Israel Fund, to deal with this violation of civil rights and the curtailment of the freedom of a journalist to do his work.

Jesse Zel Lurie
Room 1321, Plaza Hotel
Jerusalem
November 23, 1983

More Challenges This Day of Solidarity

by Bassam Shaka'a

Another year has gone by and the Palestinian cause faces more conspiracies and dangers plotted against the PLO. The Lebanese people, as well as Palestinians, are suffering under the Israeli occupation of vast areas of Lebanon and through the Phalangist-Israeli agreement.

On the Day of Solidarity with the Palestinian People, the Palestinians are facing more problems because of the fighting in north Lebanon and the conspiracies against the Palestinian cause. This year, the Palestinians feel the United Nations and its decisions have been frozen, and there is Arab disinterest in the Palestinian issue.

We hope the Day of Solidarity with the Palestinian People will be an incentive for the Palestinians, wherever they are, to work diligently at uniting themselves and bolstering unity, , particularly as there is hope in the offing following the cease-fire agreement in Tripoli between the warring parties.

This agreement should encourage unity within the PLO and its largest organisation, Fatah. We are forced to strengthen the alliance between the PLO and Arab forces struggling to confront the occupation in Lebanon and the occupied territories.

The fighting in Tripoli has had a negative impact on the people of the occupied land, who are facing a new iron fist policy. This policy confiscates more West Bank land and means more repression. Now the settlers are reinforcing themselves and gathering at the Nebi Yusef tomb in Nablus to parade their strength and arms.

This repression should be an incentive for us to strengthen solidarity with the Palestinian people and to get rid of the occupation.

The gloomy feeling and the concern over the fate of the Palestinian revolution currently prevailing in the occupied land will certainly be temporary. We will again be able to confront the occupation and defeat all conspiracies.

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Shaka'a

When Shaka'a was in Ramle prison, the Israeli authorities attempted to bribe Shaka'a by suggesting to Inaya that Shaka'a would be released if he instructed the residents of Rujib, a village near Nablus, to abandon their land case in court against the construction of Elon Moreh settlement. Inaya answered them without even consulting Shaka'a and rejected the bribe outright, saying that individuals were nothing compared to the importance of the land.

Inaya described her life with Shaka'a as one of hardship and difficulties. When they were expelled from Syria, their daughter Hana was only 25 days old. The Shaka'a's have two daughters and two sons: Hana, 21; Nidal, 20; Haytham, 16; and Ghadir, 7.

Eighteen months have passed since his expulsion from the municipality of Nablus, after his refusal to cooperate with the 'civil administration.' Shaka'a is still an important political leader who expresses his opinions and political attitudes to the West Bank residents. He is a chief critic of the 'civil administration', the policy of occupation, land confiscation and the establishment of settlements.

In last month's UN-sponsored Geneva Conference on the Question of Palestine, Shaka'a was invited as a guest of honour. He could not attend, however, because the Israeli authorities refused to permit him to travel to Geneva.

Shaka'a, under house arrest and restriction, with 15 soldiers dogging his every step, is a living Palestinian symbol of freedom.

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Ansar

they presented a complex series of arguments to suggest that the detainees should not be judged either by international or Israeli law.

They argued that the Ansar prisoners had no rights before an Israeli court as they were not on Israeli soil. They described the detention as "an act of state" against which no appeal is possible. The authorities' fallback position was that they were in fact honouring the Geneva Conventions, despite not recognising their applicability to the Ansar prisoners.

Shortly after the High Court suit was filed against the army, they established a committee to review the detention of detainees — some were released. They also said it would not be safe for lawyers to visit prisoners and there were no facilities for them to see clients.

The lawyers insisted that Israel, as occupier and sole power in the south, had legal responsibilities under international law. They cited various sections of the Geneva Conventions, both dealing with ways in which their clients had been detaineed and were being treated. The High Court deliberated the case for over a year without reaching a decision. It did say arrangements should be made for lawyers to see the prisoners, however. This was not done before the exchange was completed.

As the PLO and Israel were concluding the exchange agreement, the legal team was planning another assault on the Supreme Court. They were to demand implementation of the decision to allow them access to their clients. Lea Tsemel told *Al Fajr* a few days before Ansar was emptied she was also going to demand explanations of why detainees were being shipped once more to Israel. She confirmed recent reports that Ansar detainees had been seen in Shatta and Prison No 6, inside Israel. She was also to raise the cases of individual prisoners who were held for alleged crimes committed abroad but who faced no charges in the countries in question.

Ansar is presently empty. Past battles were successfully concluded. Israel has said officially that the camp will not be dismantled. It remains to be seen whether the next generation of Ansar detainees will be as militant, or as victorious, as the last.

The full story of the heroism of the al-Ansar prisoners has yet to be told. Some details of the transformation of the camp from a symbol of Israeli oppression to one of Palestinian and Lebanese resistance are reviewed here by **John Richardson** of *Al Fajr*.

Ansar: Israel's Grim Legacy to the History of Mass Detention

The shadow al-Ansar refugee camp cast over South Lebanon for the past year and a half has now receded. The camp held at least 10,000 prisoners from 30 countries at its peak. It is now deserted, according to Israel, and has only a few dozen inmates, according to the Lebanese Amal movement. The camp was emptied, last week, as part of the prisoner exchange deal worked out by the PLO and Israel. With it, according to one Israeli commentator, Israel got rid of a block in its throat it could neither cough-up nor swallow.

Al-Ansar was born in the summer of 1982, following the Israeli invasion of Lebanon. Reports at the time spoke of mass round-ups of the male population of the south. European and Americans released shortly afterwards reported the existance of a series of centres in South Lebanon — notably the Safa Fruit Company compound near Sidon — in which hundreds were held outside in terrible conditions, savagely beaten (some to death) and deprived of food and water. Masked informers were used to finger detainees supposedly members of resistance organisations.

These were shipped south, the Westerners said, to interrogation centres in Israel — one was identified as Megiddo military camp, ear Um al-Fahm, another a hospital near Tel Aviv. There, after more brutality (all prisoners had any personal valuables booted by Israeli guards and civilians in the process), they were grilled by intelligence officers.

With this process over, Israel had a problem of what to do with its prisoners — it solved it with Ansar. According to Hebrew newspaper reports published in the aftermath of the prisoner exchange, the authorities settled on a South Lebanon camp in order to avoid legal questions pertaining to prisoner status. In fact, according to lawyers who later took up the case of the prisoners, Israel "delegalised" those it was holding. A new term — "the detained" — was coined to refer to them. Israeli lawyers and apologists denied they were either POWs or protected civilians — two Geneva Convention categories — and refused to define any other status.

Ansar camp is situated near Ansar village, the Nabatiya region. As the occupation of the south progressed, it quickly burgeoned into a sprawling mass of tent-filled compounds. Israeli newspaper reports said there were 25 separately fenced compounds and that the whole area itself was surrounded by thick barbed wire fences.

There was only one official report of the number of detainees in Ansar, published last December in an official Israeli Army journal. They reported that at its peak, close to 10,000 detainees were being held at the camp. Recently Israeli sources have given unofficial estimates of 4-5000; 4600 were said released, last week. Palestinians released from the camp told reporters at an Algiers press conference, this week, that the books were cooked and that at times there were 10,000 prisoners when Israel was announcing only 5000.

Israel quickly established a system it hoped would run the camp. They appointed what they called *mukhtars* (literally village head-men) for each 18-25-man tent. These 'trusties' were to be their contacts in the camp; through them complaints and demands would be channelled to the camp commandant and they would have some disciplinary powers and distribute food and other aid.

One Lebanese detainee described those early days in the camp in an interview with the German Magazine *Der Speigel*, earlier this year:

"When they freed us from the handcuffs and blindfolds, we found ourselves in front of a huge concentration camp, Ansar, the largest detention camp in the Middle East. It is near the village of Ansar in the west and to Damour in the east. In the period I was held there the camp was divided into 23 small units, each one holding 500 detainees. There were around 10,000 detainees: Palestinians, Lebanese, Syrians, Iraqis, Indians, Turks, Egyptians, Yemenis, Pakistanis, Bangladeshis. From Bangladesh alone there were 750 detainees.

"The camp was a large network with watchtowers. The Israeli guards were armed with heavy batons. Opposite each tent there was a continuous 24-hour guard of three soldiers. They gave us a camp number and a tent number and allotted us an Arab *mukhtar*. 'He,' said the Israelis, 'is empowered to punish you. He is the liaison between you and us. You must obey his orders because he represents the Israeli Army.'

"After supper — a 200 gram box of *halaweh* (sesame paste) for 25 persons and bread — the *mukhtar* ordered us to go to sleep immediately. But many of us couldn't sleep because of painful wounds, the result of beatings we got during the journey. The *mukhtar* beat with the butt of a hoe all those who cried, sighed or moaned — the Israeli batons were not strong enough for him. The next morning he ordered us to stand with arms spread out like the wings of a plane. Those whose arms dropped were beaten. An Israeli bulldozer driver stopped nearby and laughed: 'It's good to see an Arab beating an Arab.'

"Things became chaotic when 'our *mukhtar*' slapped on old man who complained about the terrible food. The young men got hold of the *mukhtar* and those under his protection. The hated man lay on the ground and we kicked him. In a flash, Israeli soldiers appeared and fired warning shots. That did not stop us breaking some of the *mukhtar*'s ribs. An Israeli Army committee investigated the incident and allowed us to choose a new *mukhtar*. During the same period, the Israelis were ordered not to interfere in our affairs. We saw them only during the hours of daily routine."

It was perhaps this incident or one of the many others like it that proved to be a turning point in the history of Ansar. To that point the Israeli military had virtual freedom of the camp, frequently patrolled around and within the compound and dominated prison life. Food and recreational materials from the International Committee of the Red Cross were given or withheld at will, according to reports from released detainees. After the early months, however, prisoner organisation began to take over.

By the time the first challenge to the legality of Ansar was being mounted in Israeli courts, November 30, 1982, lawyers were describing Saleh Ta'amari, former PLO military commander in the south, as "spokesman and representative of the prisoners in the camp." According to a July 1983 *HaAretz* report, prisoners established a committee made up of some professional people and camp commanders of PLO factions. Under Ta'amari's leadership, this committee rapidly took over virtually all aspects of camp life and started making demands on the camp guards.

By this summer, prisoners were: running courses in military, academic and artistic subjects; had their news service based on reports coming from illicit radios turned to *Sawt Falastin* and Lebanese stations; ran their own disciplinary system; and successfully concluded negotiations with the Israelis for better food and conditions.

Reports coming out now say that fences between compounds were broken down, prisoners mixed freely and they increasingly refused any cooperation with the Israelis. A recent Israel TV report showed a Palestinian flag flying defiantly in the centre of the camp. Stone-throwing and attacks on Israelis were commonplace.

Defiance peaked in June when prisoners demonstrated on the first anniversary of the Israeli invasion. By then the camp had been split in two — Ansar A and B. An Israeli guard reported:

"The tents were razed one by one, June 6, on the first anniversary of the war. We stood on the roof of the building and watched them burning the tents. One soldier from the storage unit who tood next to me shouted after every tent was burned, 'One million more!'

"On the morning of June 7, Ansar B was covered with black spots — the remains of the burned tents — and the disturbances died down. But then Ansar A started its disturbances (sic), and again tents were burned one by one. In these two disturbances the prisoners refrained from burning the kitchen tent and the clinic and did not damage the tin toilet huts. Some of them even kept the tent pegs. So, on the next day, new lean-tos filled the place."

Israel responded by detaining the camp committee. Ta'amari and the rest were pulled out of the camp — some reports said they were taken to Israel. They were soon back, however; the now well-organised prisoners simply refused any cooperation with either 'trusties' of guards. Even when prisoners were shot dead when trying to escape, according to Israeli reports, the protests continued.

This defeat seemed to lead to apathy among the guards (one had even committed suicide in the earlier months of Ansar). According to one recent Israeli newspaper report, "We didn't even know how many prisoners there were." The same report spoke of attacks against and abuse of Israeli soldiers, an "unknown" number of escapes and the practise of kidnapping guards to enforce their demands.

Former military commander of Israel's northern district Amir Drori said after a visit to the camp in August, "We are one minute before catastrophe." He fired the camp commandant and ordered 'rehabilitation' of the camp. A new concrete and asphalt-based camp was only recently completed.

The main reason for the "rehabilitation" was escapes. When Israeli guards got back into Ansar after the prisoners had left they reportedly found "an underground town" of tunnels. Earlier reports said you could hear the sound of digging with hand-made tools and stones all over the camp.

The leader of a mass break-out, August 8, explained how his group of 50 prisoners got out. He said the group dug a 22-metre tunnel in 45 days using three teams of diggers working day and night. Air was pumped into it using plastic containers, and pipes and mirrors were used to illuminate the face. The rocky terrain made shoring up unnecessary. Earth from the tunnel was spread around the compound.

The unnamed prisoner told *Associated Press* that two fake tunnels were also being dug at the same time to mislead guards. On the night of the break, he said, mock fights and parties were organised to distract guards. About 40 prisoners got clear away, with the assistance of Lebanese National Resistance fighters who came to the camp to rendezvous with the escapees.

The same prisoner said that apart from the tunnels there was on average one break a day from the camp by prisoners sneaking out in the garbage or using some other disguise. Tunnelling continued despite an Israeli crackdown after that break. Israel TV filmed part of the extensive network in their recent report on the camp.

While all this was going on inside Ansar, Israeli lawyers were trying to get to see their clients in Ansar. Lea Tsemel, Walid Fahoum and Mohammed Na'amneh, later joined by Felicia Langer and Avigdor Feldmann, took up the fight to get the status of Ansar clarified. The Israeli Army had issued, in June 1982, an order under which it could detain and hold people outside the border of the state. In their own courts

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Palestinian and Lebanese prisoners in South Lebanon following Israel's 1982 invasion. With the prisoner exchange, "Israel got rid of a block in its throat it could neither cough up nor swallow."